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amer.

VERSE

BY

WILLIAM CARY SANGER, JR.

TIDES OF COMMERCE
THE CITY OF TOIL AND DREAMS
WAR POEMS
IN THE LAND OF THE HARVEST

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press
1920

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PREFACE

MANY of the verses in this volume were written while the author was at school and college, some having been originally published in *The Vindex* of St. Mark's School, during the years 1910–1912, and others in *The Harvard Advocate* from 1913–1916. Some were written in France while the author was an ambulance driver with the American Ambulance Field Service (Dec., 1916–May, 1917) and others while he was a Lieutenant in the United States Army. A few of the verses were written while he was with the 131st Infantry, American Expeditionary Forces, during the latter part of 1918 and the first few months of 1919. Many of the war poems written in France, 1918, were first printed in the *American Field Service Bulletin*. Most of the verses in the four groups of poems included in this book were originally printed in separate volumes. *Tides of Commerce* first appeared in book form during the spring of 1915, *The City of Toil and Dreams*

JUN 8 1920

in 1916, *With the Armies of France* in the latter part of 1917, and *In the Land of the Harvest* in 1918. The date at the end of each poem is the year when it was written.

The writer wishes to thank those friends who have helped him by their comments, criticisms, and suggestions.

W. C. S., Jr.

New York City,
June, 1919.

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Tides of Commerce

Verse of the Railroad

DEDICATION

Sweep on, vast Tide of Commerce—night and
day—
Afar on steel-shod track or ocean trail,
Bearing the burdens for the world's advance,
Linking the varied lands by sea and rail.
Without thy aid what would our work avail?
Civilization owes its spread to thee;
So serve the world, till man's long fight is won,
When all our work on earth at last is done.

1911

THE HARVEST

There's a message, perhaps you have heard it,
  Coming from fields afar,
Calling you out to the harvest
  With the dawn and the morning star.
From coral and palm to glacier,
  From harbor to mountain chain,
Voices are calling for reapers
  Who are needed to harvest the grain.

Each has his work before him,
  Each has his task to do,
Steamer and dock and derrick,
  Tower and yard and crew,
Desk and bench and office,
  Tunnel and mine and rail—
All are calling for workers,
  Calling you out on the trail.

You, who have heard the summons,
  You who have learned the way,
Go—hurry on to the battle,
  Take up your task to-day.

For the world is awaiting the workers,
  Waiting—full well you know;
Up and on to the harvest,
  For the fields await you—go.

1911

SONG OF THE BUILDERS

Builders of destiny we—
Rulers of land and sea
Far to the bounds of the last, lone land—
Through the wastes untrod, and the trackless
    sand,
To the realms where the snow-capped mountains
    stand,
Go the vanguards of our trade.

Never a range too high,
Never a waste too dry,
But our ranks sweep on to the distant land
In numbers strong—a conquering band,
Knowing no fear—for we understand
The work that is ours to do.

Forward is our cry,
Though the price we pay is high;
For the seasons go and come anew—
But many a man of our far-called crew
Goes out to the task he is told to do—
Goes—and returns no more.

We conquer the plains and heights
From the palm to the northern lights,
And the waste gives way to the homes of men,
To farm, and city, and track, and train,
And the ancient hills give back again
The wealth they have held for years.

We launch new ships to trade
With lands we have found and made;
We open new fields for the world's supply,
We link them firmly with rail and tie
To the cities afar—that none may die
For want of their daily bread.

Builders of destiny, we—
Vessel, and track and quay
Tell of the lines our men surveyed,
Of the farms new-tilled, of the land that paid,
Of the cities and towns our work has made—
For the people of the world.

1911

ELECTRICITY

A flash of blue-white fire,
  A crackling trail of light,
A voice along a wire,
  A whisper in the night.

Afar from the lonely tower,
  Loosed, unfettered, free,
A grim, mysterious power,
  I answer the ship at sea.

In subway, street, or dwelling,
  Wherever the lines may reach,
There comes my current, telling
  Of power, light, and speech.

Along the silent wires,
  Over the drifting snows,
My pulse that never tires
  Beats and throbs and flows.

I speak beneath the ocean,
  Deep on mystic trails;

I thrill the land with motion,
  And race along the rails.

A flash of blue-white fire,
  A crackling trail of light,
A voice along a wire,
  A whisper in the night.

1912

THE SENTINELS OF THE LINE

(With acknowledgments to R. K.)

In the flush of the summer heat,
  In the chill of the winter's snow,
The pulses of industry beat,
  The tides of traffic flow;
And the engineers—they know
  What is staked on the signals they see,
Do we fail in the trust that is placed in our hands?
  (Clear! Line Clear!)—Not we.

Little the passengers know
  (And little the passengers care)
The meaning of what we show;
  Danger! Caution! All clear!
Along the line, far and near,
  We watch o'er the trains on their way;
Do the passengers thank us as on they go?
  (Clear! Line Clear!)—Not they.

When the sun has set in the west,
  And the shadows of night hold sway,

When the world seeks its well-earned rest,
  And forgets the cares of the day;
Do we cast our cares away?
  We watch, and the engineers see,
Do we fail them at night when they need us most?
  (Green. All clear!)—Not we.

When the storms their harvests reap,
  And the wind on the mountain roars,
When the cottages all are asleep,
  And gusts shake the windows and doors,
Do we cease to watch? Do we pause?
  Never, nor ask for pay,
Do the passengers dream of the lives that we guard?
  (Yellow! Slow down!)—Not they.

In the rush of the traffic's tide,
  When the overtime shifts are on,
When the coal from the mountain side
  To the crowded yard is borne;
And the crews come weary and worn,
  From the west and the ports by the sea,
Do we slacken our watch through the busy night?
  (Red! Line blocked!)—Not we.

'Neath the starlit skies' faint glow
  And the pale moon's specter light,
On the rails they've traveled and know
  Go the couriers grim of the night.
Heralds of power and might—
  But trusting the signals they see,
Do we fail in the trust they have placed in our
    hands?
  (Green! All clear!)—Not we.

1911

SEAFARER'S SONG OF THE NIGHT

We're swinging her into the dawn, boys,
  Over the plunging seas—
A battle of nerve and brawn, boys,
  Into the battering breeze.
The spray is flying afar, boys,
  The seas are thundering by,
As we follow the eastern star, boys,
  Under a clearing sky.

The liner rears—and falls,
  Drenched with the smoking spray,
Into a trough that appalls,
  Plunges—and ships it gray;
Then rises away to the stars,
  Pouring the water astern;
While over the hatches and spars
  The spray clouds sweep and churn.

The deckworks shudder and groan;
  Rigging, and rope, and mast

14 Seafarer's Song of the Night

Tremble and quiver and moan,
  Swayed in the stinging blast;
The smoke is blown to the west,
  Low, hard down a-lee;
And there's not much time for rest
  In a gale on the open sea.

On every side are waves,
  Multitudinous, vast,
And we watch how the ship behaves
  As the staggering seas go past;
"All snug," as she lifts and keels,
  Is the story the liner tells,
While she rears and swings and reels
  In the gray, tumultuous swells.

The stars in the sky grow dim, boys,
  The east begins to glow,
But the ocean still is grim, boys,
  And the waves still surge below;
A battle of nerve and brawn, boys,
  As the plunging seas go by,
For we're swinging her into the dawn, boys,
  Under a clearing sky.

1914

THE CHRISTMAS MAILS

The old year's nearly past,
  And Christmas time is here;
The weary world at last
  Dreams of returning cheer.
In nations near and far
  All cares are cast away,
And the stars are bright in the frosty night,
  For to-morrow is Christmas Day!

The railroad plays its part
  In making the season gay,
Cheering many a heart
  And brightening many a way.
Can you hear the trains in the night
  Humming along the rails,
Spreading their cheer afar and near,
  Trains with the Christmas mails?

Close by the window panes
  Children and parents stand
And wait for the Christmas trains
  That are hastening over the land.

And the old are awaiting the mails
  That will call back the memories dear,
Of the Christmas Chimes of bygone times
  And friends no longer near.

The letters from land and sea
  Are welcomed at every door,
And they're waiting the trains with glee
  In the homes of the rich and the poor;
For the mail's no respecter of wealth,
  The high and the low are the same;
To valley and town the mails come down,
  Brought in the government's name.

Hark! far away, do you hear
  The notes of distant bells?
The joyful sound comes near;
  Do you know the tale it tells?
It's the song of the Christmas mails,
  And they're hastening on to-night;
Their headlights glow on the frosty snow
  As they hurry along in their flight.

The mails come in from afar,
  From the lands of the east and the west;
They're swung from the ship to the car
  And they're off on their inland quest;

Can you hear the trains in the night
  Roaring along the rails?
They sing "Good cheer, afar and near,"
  For they carry the Christmas mails.

1911

2

FIFTY-FOUR FORTY RETIRED

("Locomotive 5440 has been retired from the service")

Fifty-four forty's retired,
  He was called the "Old Man of the Rail,"
And the boys of the line all liked him,
  For he never was known to fail;
And now at the General Office
  (As the charts and the records tell)
They've balanced accounts in the ledger—
  And Fifty-four forty's done well.

He's gone to that greatest of railroads
  Where the good locomotives go;
To a line where there's never a landslide,
  Or trouble from sleet or snow.
The blocks show "Clear" down the tangents,
  There's never a wreck or a break;
Not even a journal gets heated,
  And nobody makes a mistake.

When Fifty-four forty was running,
  Any day, in the sun or the rain,

You could see him climbing the mountains,
  With his heavy rumbling train.
His course lay over the ranges
  And down through valley and glen;
His life was a life of service,
  His work was to work for men.

And many a man may envy
  That record and life and work,
For Fifty-four forty was steady,
  He'd never "get tired" or shirk;
And there's many a man in the roundhouse
  Who'll be missing his whistle and bell,
For Fifty-four forty's retired—
  And Fifty-four forty's done well.

1912

THE PIONEERS

Where the distant ranges tower with their snow-
capped peaks and ledges,
Saffron colored in the sunset's dying glow;
Where the mountain goat and eagle reign su-
preme on crag and summit
And the mist hangs in the canyons down below;

Where no sound of cities' clamor ever comes to
wake the echoes,
And the solemn stillness rules the night and day;
Where the lonely, time-scarred mountains stand
like warders of the ranges—
There the pioneers are blazing out the way.

Over prairies to the desert—over sand dunes to
the mountains,
Through the passes to the plains that lie
beyond;
Driving onward, ever onward in the face of
drought and blizzard,
Thus—and only thus—the fertile land is found.
Hard and fierce the long-fought battle with the
forces of the ranges,
Bitter hunger, hopeless weariness, and thirst;

Even now, the dust of many lies forgotten on the passes
Where the force of crag and desert did its worst.

Not for them the people's praises and the eulogizing tombstones,
Or the thanks of future settlers on the land,
They are dust—and all their efforts and their labors may seem wasted,
But the lonely crags and mountains understand.

Yes, they've seen the leaders perish, but they know the trail's advancing,
For they see the thin, blue smoke that tells the tale
Of the lighted camp fires burning—far below—down in the valley,
Where the remnant still is blazing out the trail.

Storms may halt them—death may check them, for a time perhaps their efforts
May seem lost with not a hope for going on;
But though hindered and though baffled, never can the work be slackened
Till the last, long range of mountain chains is won.

1911

ROAD-SERVICE RULES

First and last of all the Orders
  To be followed day and night:
Keep your mind and keep your body
  Clean and strong and clear and right.

Be on time to take your places,
  Flagman, trainman, engineer,
Baggage master and conductor;
  And be sure your eyesight's clear.

Then inspect your apparatus,
  Brakes and signals, lights and all;
See that every bolt and bearing
  Will not fail you when you call.

See that things are in their places,
  Look to it that all is clean.
Little need there is to tell you
  What is staked on the machine.

Then you're ready for the signal,
  All your preparations done,

And your conscience will be easy
  When you've started on your run.

You, whose work is in the Coaches
  And the Pullmans—take good care
To be courteous and kindly,
  To be tolerant and fair.

Help them *all* with equal gladness:
  Young and rich—or old and gray;
Don't forget that words of kindness
  Help to cheer them on their way.

Flagmen—when your train is halted
  And your orders send you back,
Take your fuses and torpedoes
  And your flag—and guard your track.

You who man the roaring engine—
  Watch the signal arms by day;
"Caution," "Clear," or "Stop"—they'll tell you
  Of the trains along your way.

When the passengers are sleeping
  And you're racing through the night,
Watch your signals—trust their message,
  They shall guide you by their light.

Through the endless miles of darkness
"Let her drive"—and never fear;
Trust the Master Train Dispatcher,
Trust the lamps that beckon clear.

Ever watchful, ever careful,
Ever steady—true as steel;
Fearless—watch the lights before you,
While the flying shadows reel.

Racing down the level tangents,
Creeping up the mountain climb,
Mind your train—and keep her steady,
And you'll bring her in "On time."

First and last of all the orders
To be followed day and night:
Keep your mind and keep your body
Clean and strong and clear and right.

1913

ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVES

Silent as night we make our flight
  Through the shadowy, terminal zone.
With never a sound but the echoing ground
  And our warning bell's clear tone,
We skim and trail along the rail,
  Silent, fleet, alone.

By the glow of the stars we race with our cars,
  Till the terminal lights are near;
The click of the wheel and the purr of the steel
  Are the gladdening sounds we hear
As we set the pace in our headlong race,
  When the signal lights show clear.

In snow or rain we haul our train,
  Sure of our speed and power,
And the semaphores gleam—but the passengers
      dream
  As we rush past bridge and tower,
Till we halt on time to the echoing chime
  When the big clock makes the hour.

Over the trails we haul the mails
  That travel afar in the night,
And whirling down, we pass each town—
  A flare of electric light.
Silent and grim, we trust to Him
  In the rush of our shadowy flight.

1912

IN THE STARLIT VALLEY

In the lonely, starlit valley,
  Where the mountains loom, black-blue,
Like a phantom of light in the dusk of the night,
  The "Limited" train goes through.

The rails awake, and the echoes
  Ring from rock and crest,
And thunder away as the hills repay
  The song of the Flyer's quest.

The rear lights dwindle and vanish,
  The rails again are still;
The echoes cease—and all is peace
  On valley, ridge, and hill.

1912

STEAM

By the roar of a million mills,
  By the whirl of a million wheels;
By the grim refrain of the racing train,
  And the ship that rears and reels;

By the donkey engine's chatter,
  And the hoist that lifts the block;
By the soothing purr where the flywheels whir,
  By the drills that pierce the rock;

By the clatter of shoveled coal,
  And the clank of the firebox door,
By the power and might of the blinding light
  Where the white-hot fires roar;

By the flash of flying steel,
  Where the crosshead pinions gleam.
I follow the trail of wave and rail,
  I—the Toiler—Steam.

Servant of all the world·
  My task it is to be
A tireless power that toils each hour,
  Over the land and sea.

1912

WHEN THE LINER SAILED

We parted at the steamer's side
  Before they cast the hawsers clear,
The turning of the restless tide
        Was near.

Oh, world of hope and love and strife,
  Perhaps it's well for me to say
There'd been a quarrel—such is life—
        That day.

I hoped that when we came to part
  She'd choose the one alternative,
And, being forgiven—in her heart
        Forgive.

A moment there she turned her head,
  And looked away, as if to sigh,
Then raised her eyes to mine and said
        "Good-by."

And that was all; no word of cheer,
  So quiet and so cold she seemed,
But yet I thought I saw a tear
        That gleamed.

With mingled anger, pain and love,
I watched her enter at the side,
That loomed so black and vast above
The tide.

The whistle echoed through the town,
The towering vessel backed away,
And, swinging seaward, started down
The bay.

1913

IN THE CARE OF THE ENGINEER

The sunset flares—the skyline glares
  Deep black against the gold,
On land and stream the lanterns gleam
  Silent are house and fold;
The workmen cease and evening peace
  Descends on young and old.

But along the trail of the gleaming rail
  We race with the flying time.
The bridges wake and the rock-cuts shake
  To the voice of our whistle's chime;
We rouse the night in our thundering flight
  And the rails are a roaring rhyme.

With a ringing "cling-lock-whutna-whing"
  The switches crash below.
The signals flare as on we tear,
  For they're "letting the engine go";
And the reeling track goes roaring back
  At ninety an hour or so.

With a trailing swerve we round a curve,
  Where the mountain towers high,

And the strained rails sing and whine and ring
  As the reeling train goes by;
Till we plunge in the gloom of a tunnel's tomb
  And the blackness hides the sky.

With a hollow moan the girders groan
  As on to a bridge we roar,
And the song of the track is echoed back
  By rivet and beam and floor,
Till the deadened sound of the firmer ground
  Is reached on the other shore.

Cozy and warm, we're safe from harm
  Wherever the train may go;
Through towns blue-white with the pale moon's light
  On roof and street below,
Through valleys deep where rivers creep
  All dim in the starlit glow.

But the day is done and the long night's run
  Is a time for the sleep of the blest;
The drowsy purr of the dull wheels' whir
  Will lull our souls to rest
As we follow the stream where the lamplights gleam,
  Or round the mountain crest.

So on we go—there's a man we know
  Who'll watch if the blocks are "clear";
We'll soon be asleep and we'll slumber deep
  With never a thought of fear;
Our cares will cease and we'll rest in peace,
  And we'll trust to the engineer.

1913

THE FREIGHTS

Bearing the weight of the harvest,
  Traveling night and day,
Linking a nation together,
  Plodding along the way;
On to the distant cities,
  The ponderous freights go by,
Afar to the inland waters,
  Away to the mountains high.

Toiling along without ceasing,
  Beating through storms and rains,
Serving their country as workers
  On go the heavy trains.
It is they who carry the burdens
  From valley and mountain side;
Bringing the wealth of a nation
  Down to the ships at the tide.

And the passengers, riding in comfort,
  Close by the windowpanes,
Reading their books and stories,
  Sheltered from storms and rains,

Never begin to consider
  The work of the freights far and nigh,
And scarcely look up from their reading
  As the ponderous trains go by.

But the freights aren't looking for praises
  (Praises you buy and sell).
Work is their well-known watchword;
  Toil is the tale they tell.
For humanity needs their service,
  And the freights will go laboring on,
Serving the world as workers
  Till the work of the world is done.

1911

ROAD SONG OF THE CREWS

We're takin' her down the line, my boys.
  The wheels are roarin' below.
Tunnel and track are answerin' back,
  For we're lettin' her out, you know.
We're swingin' along on time, my boys.
  The miles are reelin' away.
For we're takin' her down to the terminal town.
  We're takin' her down to-day.

1911

BY THE FLARE OF THE NORTHERN LIGHTS

In the frozen silent Arctic,
  Where the Great Cold rules in might,
Where the day is ice-blue whiteness
  From the snow fields' blinding light,

Where the night is frozen stillness
  And the cold stars twinkle and gleam,
And the frosty skies are lurid
  With the Northern Lights astream;

Violet, blue, and yellow,
  Copper, and rose—they glow,
Flickering, ghostly, flaring,
  Silent they come and go,

Weird, and dim, and haunting,
  They gleam on the ice-packed range,
Till the gaunt ice crags and ledges
  Flare, and color, and change,

There, in that endless silence,
  At rest—for evermore,
There sleeps a band of the Vanguard
  Who trailed to the northern shore.

They sleep through the frozen darkness;
  The stars are overhead,
And the streamers flame in the heavens,
  Sapphire, copper, and red.

No earthly care shall harm them,
  They shall rest while the world grows old,
For their Guardian Spirit watches:
  The pitiless Northern Cold.

At rest—with the stars above them,
  In the silent, long, long nights,
We'll leave them to the glory
  And the flare of the Northern Lights.

1913

THE ROUNDHOUSE

The full moon shines serenely
  Through the gaps in the wisplike clouds,
And the smoke from the roundhouse rises
  And drifts aloft in shrouds
That melt as they mount in the stillness
  And dissolve in the phantom light,
Where the pale moon's silver glory
  Illumines the dusk of night.
In the shadowy vaults of the roundhouse,
  Where the grim, steel racers sleep,
The men of the "night shift" forces
  Their smoky vigil keep—
Hot and stained with labor,
  Weird and grimy bands,
Moving about the engines
  With torches in their hands.
They climb to the top of the boiler,
  They creep below to the pit,
And wherever a bolt has loosened
  They tighten her up a bit;

They crouch between the drivers,
  And there, by the torches' light,
Inspect the rods and bearings
  To see that all is right.

In the depths of the smoking circle
  There's an engine cleaned for the run,
Inspected and oiled for the journey—
  And the "hostler's" work is done.
The roar of her steam, escaping
  Sets a-tremble the girders near,
And the men in the ringing deafness
  Shout in each other's ear.
But look! Out there in the darkness
  There's a twinkle of yellow light,
And slowly the roaring monster
  Slips out in the dead of the night.
She stops on the turntable center,
  Her steam rising high in the air,
And her little bell steadily clanging
  With warning mellow and clear.
The light of the moon's upon her,
  With shadows of gray and black,
As she swings like a ship at anchor
  Till she picks up her outbound track;

Then slowly rolls to the station
  To wait for the westbound train
That she'll haul through the night and darkness
  Till she's finished her run again.

A hush comes over the roundhouse,
  There's only a light here and there;
The silver moon shines in the heavens,
  And the smoke drifts high in the air.

1912

THE VALLEY OF PLAY

In the Valley of Play where daisies grow,
Blue skies above, green fields below,
The children watch the flyers go
  Along the four-tracked line.

They pause awhile in the midst of play
To see the trains rush past each day
From ever so far and far away,
  Along the mysterious line.

They like to watch them running fast;
A trail of cars—a whistle's blast,
And the block swings back—for the flyer's passed,
  And dwindling down to a speck.

So they come to the orchard every day
And "make believe"—in their Valley of Play—
That they themselves are riding away
  Along the four-tracked line.

1912

WHAT THE RAILROAD NEVER TELLS

The low-lying mist of the cold afternoon
  Has shrouded the land in its curtain of gray,
As our "Limited" hastens past valley and dale
  Through the cheerless, dreary day.

My thoughts go back to the dim, lost years
  That have passed since the railroad was first begun;
To the strife for supremacy, commerce, and trade,
  To the records of victories won.

And while I am dreaming of deeds in the past
  Whose story the years of the future will show,
It comes to me now, as it ne'er has before,
  How little we really do know—

How little we know of the sorrow and strife,
  Of the sadness and gloom, of the struggles and tears;
The dreams and the failures, the secrets and woes
  Lost in the bygone years.

Every tunnel and cut, every bridge on the line
  Has a story to tell that will never be known;
Each mile has its tale, each triumph its gloom,
  Buried deep in the years that have flown.

And all of these secrets are lost in the past,
  Where they sleep in oblivion—yes, and sleep
    well;
For only the railroad remembers the tale;
  And the railroad will never tell.

1911

THE INVENTOR

This is the child of my planning,
  Crown of the work of my mind,
Goal of the years of my toiling,
  The prize I have longed to find.

Oh, the Dreams I have constantly cherished,
  And the Hopes that have led me on;
And the Prayers to the Master-Builder
  That this—only this—be done.

And, God! what trails I've traveled!
  What failures, defeats, and pains
Have followed my endless searching,
  That the world might reap my gains!

But now the search is ended,
  The years of toil are gone;
My Dream of Dreams is finished;
  My Work at last is done.

Then will I praise the Master
  Who fashions every plan,
And may my work be useful
  In serving God and Man.

1912

AT THE END OF THE NIGHT

The lights of the railroad shimmer
  In the river's lazy tide,
And the lamps on the bridges glimmer
  Where the waters shift and glide.

But soon the night will be ended;
  Slowly the heavens fade,
While the shadowy hills are blended
  With the nearer Works of Trade.

And while the star-points quiver;
  The dawn-light spreads, gray-blue;
The mist creeps up from the river;
  And the rails are wet with dew.

The awakening heaven changes;
  The river haze drifts low;
And there comes on the eastern ranges
  A soft, red-golden glow

That spreads where the clouds are drifting—
  Gold, and orange, and rose,

Lilac and crimson—shifting
  Where the cloud-belt flames and glows,

Till the sunlight flares on the ridges,
  The dawn-mist clears away;
The car windows flash on the bridges,
  And the world begins the day.

1913

IN THE PULLMAN WINDOW

The evening dusk has dimmed the yard
  Where signals twinkle clear,
The trains are bright with electric light
  And happiness and cheer.

A "Limited" pulls slowly out,
  The switches clank below
As out she trails across the rails,
  Majestically and slow.

I watch the lighted windows pass,
  As on and on they glide;
A girl appears—and disappears;
  (One glimpse can hold you tied).

Dark, fluffy hair, uptilted nose,
  Dear lips and laughing eyes,
Unconscious there that *one* may care,
  Beneath the starlit skies.

I watch the train lights fade away
  And mock my vain endeavor;
Yet memory holds her in its folds,
  Though she is gone forever.

I wonder who she is, and whom
  She loves and where she goes;
And if she dreams of Southern streams
  Or drifting Northern snows.

But far away, through shadowy hours,
  The flyer will whirl and roar;
And she will sleep—while lanterns keep
  Their watch on semaphore.

We know the pace those flyers set,
  We know that lives are dear,
Through storm and rain—God speed that train—
  And may the blocks show "Clear."

1912

THE ANSWER

The question came from the idlers,
  Lost in laughter and play,
Knowing no work or purpose,
  Whiling their time away;
Indebted to many a worker
  For luxury, wealth, and ease,
Yet living in careless splendor,
  And seeking the things that please.

From the lips of these play-loving people,
  Bound by the harbor's bar,
A question was asked of their brothers
  Who battle in lands afar:
"Why have you left your pleasures
  To travel on distant trails?
Why have you gone to the world-ends
  With your bridges and cars and rails?

"Had you chosen the life that was given,
  And forgotten the hills and the sea,
You would doubtless be living in splendor,
  And luxury—even as we.

Explain to us then your folly;
  Tell us your tale, and why
You have turned from the cnance that was offered
  To battle and toil and die?"

The answer came from the vanguard,
  Out on the distant shore,
Building new harbors and highways,
  Seeking new lands to explore;
Planning and making great cities,
  Tilling the fresh-turned soil;
Molding new kingdoms of commerce
  By endless labor and toil.

"Who are you to be talking of folly?
  And what have you done to know?
Have you traveled the distant ranges
  Where the trails are blocked with snow?
Have you felt the pangs of hunger?
  And known the pain of thirst?
Have you battled with storm and ocean
  When the hurricane roared its worst?

"Would you seek from us then our answer?
  Do you ask for our reasons, and why

We have turned from the chance that was offered
  To battle and toil and die?
Then follow the track of our armies;
  Go where our conquerors go;
Trail where our legions have traveled—
  Then perhaps you will know!"

1912

ON THE LINE

Well, speakin' o' queer things, Jimmy,
  It's funny what some people say
When they're talkin' o' railroads in general,
  Which they know little of, by the way.

Last week I was down at the station,
  An' some folks who were standin' near,
Were talkin' o' life on the railroad,
  An' the work the men do through the year.

They said that our hours were easy,
  That the chance for promotion was fine;
That pay was high in the service,
  An' that work wasn't hard on the line.

Now, Jim, when they study a railroad,
  From the trains as they ride to and fro,
They look wise—an' tell all about it,
  For you see, Jim, they *think* they know.

But, Jimmy, it doesn't much matter,
  What they talk of or what they may claim,
For do what you will on the railroad,
  The work's pretty much all the same.

It's the same hard work, an' we know it,
  Week in an' week out through the year,
An' the same long runs for the train crews.
  You know, Jim, you've worked with me here.

What's more, once you get on the railroad
  The chances are, Jim, that you'll stay.
There's something about it that holds you;
  Would *you* quit your job to-day?

An' as for these people who study
  Our work from a Pullman car,
Though they talk o' the things as they know 'em,
  They don't see the things as they are.

But, Jimmy, we've been at this business,
  Till we know every signal an' sign,
Yes, we know what it's like on the railroad,
  For, Jimmy—we've worked on the line.

1911

THE KINGDOM OF INDUSTRY

Each girder, derrick, shaft, and block
At work on boat, and bridge, and dock,
Tells of our strength on every hand:
Power that conquers sea and land.
Though hidden ports lie far away,
Our steamers anchor in the bay;
Though desert wastes are parched and dry,
Over the sands our "Limiteds" fly.
Never a range so blocked with snow
But through the rock our tunnels go;
Never a gorge so wild and deep
But over the void our bridges creep;
By City and Ship, by Bridge and Car—
Our Kingdom of Industry stretches afar.
May we, then, boast of our Empire? Never,
For Thine is the Kingdom for ever and ever.

1913

AS THE WESTBOUND TRAIN GOES BY

Trailing away, off and away,
Into the west at the close of the day,
Speeding afar, fast and afar,
To the magical land of the evening star:
Into the sunset light you go
Leaving me here, and I long to know
Whom you carry, what joys and fears
Within you burn, what dreams and tears
Assail the hearts of those you bear
To the land where the sunset colors flare.

1915

THE LIGHTSHIPS

Rising and falling, high and low, in the swell and
the salt-washed spray;
Over again and back again on the shifting
ocean floor;
Never a rest and never a pause through the
length of night and day,
We guard the gate from the open sea to the
bay and the dock-lined shore.

We bathe in the mist of the morning haze, as it
clears in the warmth of the sun,
And the ships and headlands come to view, on
the gold-gray, oily sea;
And the tideway slips and eddies and curls in its
restless, rock-bound run,
While around and above in the pale blue sky the
sea gulls circle free.

In the dead of the silent, noonday hour, when the
sea is a quiver of heat,
We rise and fall in the lazy swell, while the
hot ropes slap on the mast,

And in from the ocean or outward bound, where
the channel and sea-way meet,
We watch the ships on the languid sea as they
move serenely past.

When the blood-red sun sinks low in the west,
and the sea is a fire of light,
When the skies are all crimson and purple and
gold, and the water is colored below;
The lamps on the shore-line twinkle and gleam
and our beacon awakes for the night,
As we swing in the golden, eddying wash of the
tide-way's lazy flow.

Through the endless watch of the long, long
night our beacon lamp shines clear,
And far away in the lonely dark, the ships
pick up the light—
The welcome light that tells the crew the harbor
now is near,
And guides them safely through the void of the
ocean's unknown night.

We watch the big, black ships loom up across the
outer bars,
Gaunt phantoms of the mystic deep with
porthole lights aglow;

And 'way on high their roaring stacks stand black
against the stars,
While the ghostly phosphor gleams and flares
about the sea below.

When the cold gray fog comes creeping in with its
dreary, smoky pall,
And the blind ships' fog-blasts pierce the mist
and answer each other again,
Our warning fog-horn guides them on as they
slowly move and call,
While now and again comes the sound of bells
from afar in the misty rain.

In the driving whirl of the blinding storm, when
the hawsers creak and groan,
We rise high above, and we fall far away till
the plunging bow goes under.
And afar through the smoke of the roaring storm,
our fog-horn's bellowing moan
Mingles at times with the rattling crash of the
lightning and echoing thunder.

Never we tire—and night and day, in sun, or
rain, or snow,
We welcome the giant deep-sea ships, as we
swing in the ocean's foam;

And up on the bridge of the passing boats, where
the Captains stand, they know
The work we do, and they bless the ship that
guides them safely home.

1912.

NIGHTSONG

(A little boy, who in life used to watch the railroad trains and semaphores and signal lights, is buried in a cemetery close to the railroad tracks, where the block signals guard the right of way.)

Thou hast played long enough,
little child,
Come to thy rest;
Trusting and undefiled,
Wondrously blest.
Slowly the sunset dies:—
Radiance gleaming,
Glow of the western skies
Easterly streaming.

Softly the last golden ray
Fades in the west,
Father and mother pray,
"Calm be thy rest."
So lay thee down to sleep,
Freed from all sorrow,

While thy belovèd keep
Watch till to-morrow.

Rest, little child, through the night,
Sleep without dream,
Stars in the upper height
Twinkle and gleam.
Railroad lights in the dell
Watch close above thee,
And as thou loved them well
Know that they love thee.

So the stars shall keep watch
in the sky,
Ever thy friends,
And the lights of the line nearby,
Till the night ends.
And thy mother shall pray
for thy rest,
Her vigil keeping;
So thou art more than blest,
Child—in thy sleeping.

1914

THE CONQUERORS

The moon in the vault of heaven
  Shone down with ghostly glow,
On the field where the blood of the slaughtered
  Soaked black in the ground below,
The foe had fought bravely and fiercely
  For the cause they believed to be right,
But the legions of Rome were the victors,
  Ere the twilight had turned into night.

In the ghastly hours that followed
  The vultures kept watch till morn
O'er the helpless tortured soldiers:
  Battered, and gashed, and torn—
Slaughtered by hundreds and thousands,
  Hurled to the ranks of the dead,
Butchered with never a reason,
  But to hasten an empire's spread.

Nearby, in the camp of the victors,
  The watch fires burned through the night,
While the forms of the sleeping legions
  Were revealed by the flickering light.

Silent was all the encampment,
  As still as the forms of the dead,
Save for the champing of horses
  And the sentry's measured tread.

The soldiers were dreaming of triumphs,
  Waiting them all at home,
For they were the hosts of the victors,
  And their Empire city was Rome.
Conquerors they of all nations—
  Ocean, and field, and wood;
Avengers of might and of power,
  Victors of fire and blood.

But to-day there's another great army
  Who toil with ship and car,
Their vanguard has crossed every ocean,
  Their battle line stretches afar.
Over the world they travel
  And conquer each country and land;
For they're building a Kingdom of Kingdoms,
  An Empire Throne that will stand.

It is they who civilize nations,
  Serving mankind far and wide;
And an empire built with that purpose
  Is an empire built to abide.

The army that's winning these battles,
  The cohort that never will shirk,
Is the multitude army of labor,
  The legion of toil and of work.

They're running our railroads and vessels,
  They're at work in the city and town,
They're earning the bread of the nation,
  Yet in earning it, reap no renown.
Conquerors they of all nations,
  Conquerors worthy the name;
Who are victors by toil and endeavor,
  And in conquering, look not for fame.

1911

CLEARING THE WAY

Through the cold, drear autumn drizzle,
  And the fog's gray spectral veil,
There looms the twisted wreckage
  Strewn on the flyer's trail.
The big, steel cars lie covered
  With débris piled on high,
Truck, and spring, and coupler,
  Beam, and rail, and tie.

The battered, bloodstained roadbed,
  Torn for a hundred yards,
Gashed with the wreck of the far-strewn train,
  The work of the "crew" retards;
While hurled in lost confusion—
  Scarred, and crushed, and rent—
The cars and locomotives
  Lie piled with steelwork bent.

The great, grim, wrecking-derricks
  Toil at the helpless train,
While the creaking, groaning cables
  Are tightening under the strain.

The grating rasp of metal,
  And the clang of beams and bars,
Mingles with rattle of tackle
  As they lift the ponderous cars.

Over the twisted steelwork
  The men of the "break-down" train
Crawl on the battered Pullmans,
  Wet and soaked with rain.
But never the wind or weather
  May slacken a wrecking crew,
For there're other flyers waiting
  And they've got to get *them* through.

Nearby are the doctors and nurses
  (Rushed on a special train),
Cutting, and probing, and binding
  In the gloom of the misty rain;
While stretched beside the wreckage,
  Covered from foot to head,
With rain-soaked, blood-stained blankets,
  Lie the mangled forms of the dead.

There'll be many a family saddened,
  And many an "Extra" sold,
When they learn of the grim disaster
  In the fog and the autumn cold.

And every village and city
  Will be reading the news to-day,
For some one forgot an *order*—
  And they're clearing the signs away.

1912

THE OCEAN TRAIL

On the sandy beach of the long South shore,
Where the ocean's swell comes lazily in,
You can watch the gulls as they circle about,
And the porpoises plunging in playful rout;
You can see the ships steaming in and out,
In the track of the ocean trail.

They fly the colors of every land;
And they come from the ports of the seven seas,
Laden with wares from a distant shore,
Making their way to the nation's door,
Beating along as they have before.
Over the deep-sea lanes.

There's a ship to the south on the ocean blue—
An inbound liner from distant lands.
Crowds are waiting her down the bay:
Friends made happy by her to-day;
Can you hear her blowing to clear the way
Where the harbor meets the tide?

And further west, where the lightship rides,
There's a freighter bound for the China Sea;

Off for the land of the rising sun,
Loaded with merchandise, many a ton,
Steaming away on her distant run
To the eastern lands afar.

So every day the liners pass,
Ships of all nations and lands and tides,
By day, with the sunlit sea below,
At night, with a thousand lights aglow,
You can see the great ships come and go,
In the track of the ocean trail.

1911

NIGHT IN THE YARDS

The city was sleeping, but down in the yards
  The smoke and the steam from the engines there
Were mingled above with the fog and the rain
  In the misty, midnight air.

The semaphore lamps, as they gleamed through the dusk,
  Pierced the night fog with their ring-circled light,
And the voices of bells in the darkness and gloom
  Chimed, in the dreary night.

The echoing whistles from over the yard
  Drifted afar on the midnight haze,
And the lights of the trains stealing in from the west,
  Glowed with their misty rays.

I watched those trains as they passed through the yard,
  Into the shadowy darkness borne,

Dim trains of Pullman sleeping cars,
  Timed for the coast by morn.

The yard lights shone through the ghostly mist,
  No pen can describe it as I saw it there,
With the endless succession of dim, black cars,
  And the moving trains everywhere.

1911

CONCLUSIONS

In the noonday luncheon hour,
When we pause a bit for eatin',
  I sits upon the plankin' o' the pier.
I looks at the great harbor,
An' I does a little thinkin',
  On this busy, busy world about me here.

Beside the dock lie freighters,
Tramps of all the oceans,
  That beat around an' hail from God knows where;
You could sail, an' sail, an' sail
To the end of all the seas,
  But you'd surely find these ships a-loadin' there.

Agin' the blue above me,
I see the masts an' tackle,
  With the blocks an' ropes a-swingin' from the spars,
Where the colliers an' the lighters
An' the freighters an' the floats
  Are a-loadin' from the creakin', squeakin' cars.

The river's full o' traffic,
Tugs, an' tramps, an' ferries,
  A-steamin' up and down, an' here an' there,
An' the buildin's 'cross the water,
With their thousand gleamin' windows,
  Stand bright an' splendid in the autumn air.

There's the cries o' wheelin' sea gulls,
An' the voice o' distant whistles,
  An' the clashin' o' the couplers on the cars;
There's the city's dull, dull roar,
An' the lap an' swash o' the water,
  An' the rattlin' o' clankin' chains an' bars.

This harbor kind o' holds me,
I somehow sort o' love it—
  An' I know I couldn't keep away for long,
For I marvels at its bigness,
An' I glories in its greatness,
  An' its traffic an' its busy roarin' throng.

So I sits, and thinks, an' ponders,
An' I comes to my conclusions
  As I sees the harbor twinklin' in the sun.
I feel the Lord's a-watchin',
An' I know it's all His plannin';
  Yes, that's the way this mighty thing is done.

1912

MACHINERY SONG

Clash, and clang, and ring—oh,
Ride, and glide, and slide—ho,
Back and forth where the oil is bright
On the gleaming steel that shines in the light,
Let her go,
Let her go,
Never a stop in night or day,
Roaring onward—that's our way.
By the drowsy drone of the whirling wheel,
By the light that winks on the shining steel,
You know,
You know,
The kind of work we do—so
Listen to the song we sing:
'Cross the land and tide—ho—
Clash, and cling, and clang, and ring,
Ride, and glide, and slide.

1912

INSIDE INFORMATION

Some were good, an' some were bad;
Some were funny, an' some were sad;
An' all along was light and shade
For that's the way the road was made.
It's changed a lot for the better now
But listen to me—I'll tell you how
Things used to go in the early days
Before they learned to mend their ways:
On the railroad,
On the railroad,
They went to the limit on the line.

The railroad—well it wasn't worse
Than other big ventures, an' o' course,
Like any old business you could name,
They had their share o' fame an' shame.
There were secret ways to "fix" the freights
An' secret ways to "dodge" the rates;
So they held up cars at the inland town
While the trains o' the "trust" were rushed
right down.

On the railroad
On the railroad,
They went to the limit on the line.

Oh the men and the women—(out o' sight)
As the trains were swingin' along at night
An' the tips they often gave (on the sly)
To "help things along" or to "pass things by."
An' the cars they called O. K. an' fine
When they weren't even fit to be out on the line;
Graft "higher up" an' graft "lower down"
At many a stop an' many a town,
On the railroad,
On the railroad,
They went the limit on the line.

But there were men who'd give half pay
To help some pal along the way;
For wherever the old steel track went through
Were plenty o' boys with hearts true blue.
I've seen a conductor pay full fare
For a poor old lady who hadn't her share
O' the coin o' the world—but her son was sick
An' it saved his life that she got there quick,
On the railroad,
On the railroad,
Oh, a lot was good on the line.

There's Joe who noticed a boy one day,
As he started to cross in the "Limited's" way.
Joe saved the kid—but his work was done,
(For a life was paid for the life he had won),
On the railroad,
On the railroad,
For a lot was good on the line.

Oh, the railroad dreamed, an' the railroad willed,
The railroad blessed, an' the railroad killed,
An' wrong went along with the right you know,
For that's the way that things would go
On the railroad,
On the railroad,
There was light an' shade on the line.

1912

THE HARBOR LIGHTS

Lights along the rivers, on the docks, and on the buildings—
Lamps that tower skyward in the offices aglow—
Twinkling chains of gold extending far along the shore line—
Green and red lights gliding to and fro.

The circling gulls have seen them, wheeling round the docks at sunset,
And the crowds on bridge and ferry know the lamps that glisten clear;
While the seamen on the vessels inward bound from foreign waters
Watch with joy the welcome harbor lights appear.

There are yellow pin points shining from a thousand city windows,
And the arc lights on the docks and on the bridges twinkle white;

Here and there the emerald greens of distant vacuum lamps are glowing,
Adding color to the gleaming chains of light.

The electric-lighted bridges span the traffic-studded river,
While the slowly crawling trolleys and the elevated trains,
Crossing and recrossing with their ceaseless tide of people,
Blink like many twinkling diamond chains.

At the entrance of the harbor, where the rivers meet the ocean,
And the faithful little pilot boats their endless vigil keep,
There the lonely lights are watching—flash and darkness—flash and darkness;
Beacons, welcoming the couriers of the deep.

A thousand points that gleam and flare from boat and bridge and building—
Gliding lights reflected in the shifting tide below—
Lamps that tower skyward, and beacons at the entrance—
Green and red lights moving to and fro.

1912

TRANSPORTATION SONG

Servants of the land,
  Toilers of the deep,
Far across the sand,
  Over crag and steep.
Blasting through the ridges,
  Beating through the snow,
Building cañon bridges
  Where the line shall go.
Steering ocean courses,
  Never sailed by man,
Crushing nature's forces
  To serve our mighty Plan.
Faithful here we stand,
  We who never sleep;
Servants of the Land,
  Toilers of the Deep.

1912
6

WATER POWER

From the eddying, racing water,
By the gates of the towering dam,
We plunge down—down—through the tunnel,
Through the dark of the steel-bound tunnel;
Through the whirling crush of the tunnel,
Till we crash on the turbine blades—
Oh, yes!
And we swirl on the turbine blades.
And the turbines thrill with power
And the dynamos wake with life,
Tremble with surging life,
Throb with electric life.
And through each pulsing hour
In our vaults of stone and steel,
We echo our Song of Power
As the turbines race and reel.

1913

THE MAN WHO KNOWS

There's a lonely cut in the mountain chain
  Where the railroad line goes through;
There's a man who guards with a watchful eye
Each bolt and plate and rail and tie,
And watches the thundering trains go by
  As they roar through the echoing cut.

And down the polished lines of steel
  (Once an Indian trail)
At a bend in the stream by the mountain flank,
Where the forest and brush grow thick and rank,
And the line skirts close to the river bank,
  The double bridges stand.

One day, when the rising flood-swept stream
  Had reached the record mark,
The man at the cut held his watch in his hand,
He was waiting the flyer (you'll understand
He was proud that day) for his own son's hand
  Held the lever that ruled the train.

He had just been promoted that very day,
  And his father alone in the cut

Was waiting to cheer as the train went through;
He listened! Yes—there her whistle blew!
And she'd soon be near, for the old man knew
  She was just beyond the stream.

He paused again—stopped short, looked up,
  And gripped his flag-stick tight,
For the rumbling groan of a distant clash
Boomed out—and the mountains reëchoed the
    crash;
The old man listened and quick as a flash
  He thought of the weakened bridge.

He thought of the chance for life and death—
  And he thought of the engineer,
Had the flyer passed when the girders fell?
Which bridge had gone? (For the man knew well
Some bridge had gone)—but the blocks would tell;
  And he hurried around the curve.

Blindly he stumbled along the ties,
  Till he came to the telltale blocks;
* "Danger," they showed; no train was near;

* In one particular type of block signal, which is now coming into fairly general use, the normal position of the signal arm is at "Danger," the block signal showing "Clear" only when a train is approaching and the block ahead is clear.

He thought of the bridge, and the flood-washed
pier
And the rumbling boom that reached his ear,
And he felt that the worst had come.

He knelt and made the sign of the Cross—
The danger block swung Clear,
"Clear!" All clear along the way!
(For there's One whom even the blocks obey)
He heard a whistle from far away,
And he knew that the train was saved.

Are you wondering how the thing was done?
Or the way the train came through?
Then go to the time-scarred mountain chain,
Where the rocks ring back to the roar of the train,
And the old man watches through storm and
rain—
Go ask the man—he knows.

1912

WHERE THERE'S NEVER A DRESS PARADE

One day I was watching the evening parade,
  The sunset shone on the ranks near by
With their rifles and swords flashing bright in the light
  And their banners and colors on high.

Along the edge of the field a crowd
  Had gathered to look at the soldiers there,
While the measured strains of the regiment's band
  Came clear on the evening air.

As I gazed on the scene with its color and life,
  Its bands and its banners, its tassels and braid,
I thought of another great army of men,
  Where there's never a Dress Parade.

I thought of the trains rushing on through the night,
  Waking the echoes of mountain and glen;
And I knew that the men who were running those trains
  Might never see home again.

The army of commerce toils on, night and day;
And the world cares but little, and little it knows,
But the work never stops, and the army toils on,
While the volume of traffic still grows.

And few are the people who think of those men,
Or the toll of their ranks in the course of a year,
Or the work which they do and the lives which they guard
While the passengers ride without fear.

For the vast tide of commerce sweeps on in its course,
While the army that labors is little repaid.
Yes—the work of the railroad forever goes on,
But there's never a Dress Parade.

1910

THE "MILE-A-MINUTE" TRAINS

Every minute along the line
  Counts when the trip is done;
Every division along the way
  Means so many hours to run;
And sixty minutes is sixty miles
  Whether it shines or rains.
They can't afford to waste their time
  On the mile-a-minute trains.

There's ease and comfort within the cars,
  Much like a good hotel,
With porter or waiter to come to your chair
  When you press the electric bell.
And books and papers, and valets and maids,
  As you cross the mountain chains;
But it's different up in the cab ahead
  On the mile-a-minute trains.

Whenever an order is sent to a crew,
  They know that it means "Obey,"

For it's life and death—and they've got to be
there,
On the job, or they're fired that day.
In other work where rules are slack;
Things happen, and no one complains,
But the men of the line—Oh, they'd better keep
straight,
On the mile-a-minute trains.

A lot depends on the way things work;
Levers, and locks, and bars;
Brakes and bearings, bolts and valves,
For the big steel Pullman cars;
Rails and ballast, lights and guards,
Rivets and rods and chains;
If things aren't right, God help 'em all,
On the mile-a-minute trains.

1911

THE FULFILLMENT

The works of steel and iron,
  The monuments of man,
Are but the great fulfillment
  Of Thy all-knowing plan.

Thine is the Hand that fashions
  The racers of the rails,
And builds the giant steamers
  That ply the ocean trails.

And Thine the strength that conquers
  The cañons and the ridges,
That drives the rock-hewn tunnels
  And hangs the dizzy bridges.

That rears our towered cities,
  And runs our ringing drills,
That turns our whirring turbines
  And drives our whirling mills.

In all our hands have fashioned;
  In all our brains have known;
We pay to Thee our homage
  We give to Thee Thine own.

Thus, to the distant ages—
Thus, since life began—
Our works are the fulfillment
Of Thy controlling plan.

1912

SEAWARD LIGHTS

Lamps along the coast-line twinkle;
Far to the south the Sandy Hook Light
Flashes to seaward.
Along the shore the lullaby wash of the lazy
"ground-swell,"
And a distant bell-buoy faintly tolls
Now and again.

1915

THE PANAMA CANAL

A plan, a dream and a landing,
A flag in the breeze unfurled;
A task begun in the glare of the sun
Before the eyes of the world.

A battle with rock and bowlder,
A fight with fever and slide,
Through sun and rain, derrick and train
Toiling side by side.

Scores of great steam-shovels,
An army of engineers,
Hosts who toil in the rock-strewn soil
Scorning pain and fears.

Day by day the battle,
Seemingly never won,
Years go past—but then—at last
The giant task is done.

Sunshine warm on the palm trees,
Lazy the sea and sky,
Serene, in state, through lock and gate
The ships of the world go by.

March, 1916

AEROPLANES

By day the blue above us,
Below—on the dusty plain,
A factory stack, and a railroad track
And a slowly crawling train

Cities pass below us,
Village, farm, and home,
And the sandy shore where the breakers roar
And wash in a line of foam.

By night the stars above us,
The moondrift on the clouds
And far below the land-lights glow
From mystic shadow shrouds.

Soaring above the ocean
And flying far and free
From our starry height we see the light
Of a ship on the moonlit sea.

March, 1916

FACTORIES

Chill of the dawn,
A dreary mist,
And a city that wakes to toil.
Youthful tired faces, aroused from sleep,
Wistfully brushing aside their star-dreams
Till the stillness of another night shall come.
The long deep blast of a factory whistle
And another
And another—from here and there about the
city.

A thousand windows—cold and chill—
And somber portals through which the hosts of
toilers pass
Soon to be lost in the labyrinth of the dreary
buildings.

A low, sullen murmur in the dawn
Growing and growing
Till all the machinery
Pulses in chorus.
Hours—slowly—pass,

To the reverberating monotony of whirling and
clashing and clanking machines.
At noon—a brief pause
And again the toil goes on
Hour by hour.

Evening shadows come,
The pulsing of the factory dies down
A strange uncanny stillness
Broken only by the footfalls of the weary hosts
returning home
To eat their evening meal,
And then to rest in sleep,
Finding again the star-dreams
That shall refresh their tired souls
Until the coming of another dawn.

March, 1916

IRON ORE MINES

(Lake Superior District)

Tunnels of red rock,
Chill and dripping moisture,
Shafts and hoists
Reluctantly echoing to the muffled hollow booming of distant blasts,
Dampness and dimness,
Narrow-gauge tracks and switches,
And the grimy faces of the miners,
Who toil in the subterranean mazes.
Brown—red, moisture-soaked planks, and ladders and supporting columns.
From somewhere in the far away tunnels
The dull reverberation of a rock drill
That wakes the silence of the sullen caverns.

March, 1916

STEEL WORKS

White-hot metal—flaring;
Molten streams of fire,
And in the giant rolling-mills
Massive machines
That clash and whirl and roar
Throughout the fevered hours.
Vast dusky interiors
Where huge electric cranes
Far up among the dim roof-girders
Roll back and forth
Majestically
Bearing beneath them
Ponderous forgings
To mold the world anew.

March, 1916.

915931

INTERNATIONAL

Hosts of workers
Toiling for their daily bread
Knowing far better than captains and kings
The meaning of World Wide Brotherhood.
International—the banner of their labor.
These it is who shall form the vanguard
Of the new Federation of the World.

March, 1916

TERMINAL DREAMS

When the miles of life are past,
And the train is home at last,
  And the signal lights grow dim and
    melt away,
When the last long run is over,
And we cross that boundary river,
  We'll have rest—God knows we'll
    need it—on that day.

1912

TO THE LIGHTS OF THE LINES

Lights of the Lines, receive the thanks
  Of one who, now returning,
Sees on the well-known river banks
  Your welcome signals burning.

Now, as in bygone saddened nights,
  Gleaming with hope you lend me
Strength and repose; oh steadfast lights,
  Ever may you befriend me!

Signals that guard the "right of way"
  Into the darkness blending,
Ever so far—and far away,
  Over the world extending;

Sentinel lights that gird the earth,
  To you my songs are given,
Knowing them far below your worth
  However much I've striven.

Little the world is like to know
  All you have done to aid me,
Nor can my poor words ever show
  How you have cheered and stayed me;

For, in the night, you brought to me
  Hope, in the hours of sadness,
Light that enabled me to see,
  Courage, and faith, and gladness.

Nor is compassion an offense,
  And, in the Great To-morrow,
Surely the Lord will recompense
  Those who have lightened sorrow.

Then do I bring to you my praise,
  You who have stood beside me;
And to the end of all my days
  May you be near to guide me!

1914

AFAR ON THE RAILS AND TIDEWAYS

Afar on the rails and tideways,
  Throughout the night and day,
The trains and the ships are toiling
  On the land and the ocean way.

Looming above the waters
  In the crimson evening glow,
Black against the sunset,
  The great ships come and go.

And through the mist of the valley,
  When night creeps down at last,
Like glowing ghosts in the darkness,
  The lighted trains go past.

Then oh, for a Master Painter!
  Oh, for a Master Hand!
To paint such scenes on canvas
  That men might understand.

Would that some fire-souled dreamer,
  Whose brush held a magic sway,
A Raphael, Titian, or Turner,
  Would take up the work to-day!

That the world might see and remember
  The wonder of it all,
And understand the message
  Of our commerce, great and small.

Then oh, for a Master Painter!
  Oh, for a Master Hand!
To paint the *work* on canvas,
  That the world might understand.

1911

APOLOGY

Kingdoms of industry, realms of tide and rail,
Snow-crested peaks, and cities thronged with life,
Forgive the feeble hand that strives to paint—
And only half suggests the wonder, and the power
And the glory of the things my eyes have seen.

1912

THE TERMINAL

The skies above the city change and glow;
And radiant, golden clouds are trailed across
The softly fading blue, while here and there
About the streets, the lights begin to gleam.
The busy shops along the crowded lanes
Are bright within, while down the asphalt streets
The endless lines of restless autos crawl,
And stop, and start, and move ahead again,
The overcrowded trolleys jolt and clang—
Aglow with lights—while all along the way
A countless host incessantly goes by.

And where the roaring city's busy tide
Seems blackest in its shifting, moving stream,
There, massive in its solemn dignity,
The terminal stands—its solid granite walls
Touched by the last faint crimson sunset glow,
Its open portals black with pulsing life
That goes to distant lands, or comes from far.

Within the terminal—vast and vaulted high—
The footsteps seem to deaden as they fall,

THE RULING LAW

Master of Commerce, King of land and seas,
  Maker of all, and Judge of might and awe;
Forbid that in our work we should forget
  That all is subject to thy Ruling Law.

Cities and towers reared against the sky,
  Far-trailing trains that conquer cliff and hill;
Wires and lines that link the farthest lands—
  These and their like, we fashion as we will.

And should we boast of what our hands have made,
  May we remember, Lord, that Thou art nigh—
For we could hold no sway, nor might, nor power.
  Were it not granted to us from on high.

And who are we to claim Thy work as ours,
  To boast, or to presume to build and rear?
Save in the might and power of Thy hand
  That gives us strength to serve Thee without fear.

Then may we lay our conquering strands of steel,
  And build our towering ships to rule the seas,
And rear our Works, with girder, block, and stone
  Strong in the faith that Thou art Lord of
    These.

1912

L'ENVOI

The rails and docks and buildings now grow dim;
The sunset glow is in the western sky;
And harbor lights and yard lights twinkle now.
The night-shift's on—and others are in quest
Of quiet after toil—their needed rest.
And so farewell, lights of the rail and tide;
And while the world sleeps on, your watch still
    keep
O'er distant steel-shod trail and ocean deep.

1911

The City of Toil and Dreams

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BY
WILLIAM CARY SANGER, JR.

To

My Father and Mother

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BY
WILLIAM CARY SANGER, JR.

To

My Father and Mother

"The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest."

A CREED OF THE HARBOR

I believe in you, great harbor,
And great city;
I believe in your courage,
Your toil,
And your dreams.
Slowly but surely from the city of Yesterday and
To-day
You are building a new and infinitely wonderful
City of To-morrow.
I was born at your gates
And have watched and loved you
Through the years:
Your ships and docks, your towering buildings,
your streets black with humanity;
I have watched the intense and ceaseless struggle
Within your soul,
The passionate striving of the forces of good and
evil.
I believe that you shall be victorious, great har-
bor and city.

I believe in your To-morrow.
Yet there are many who have hated you
And feared you
And cursed you.
Cursed you for your power and pride,
Cursed you for your merciless crushing of their
bodies and their souls.
Seeing only the driftwood and the refuse
Floating beside some old, uncared-for wooden
dock,
Not seeing
Your clean, new granite docks and piers—
Heedless of your white stone towers
Against the summer skies,
Neglecting to see the
Taintless tide come rolling in to your distant,
sandy beaches.
Your problems I have studied
And striven to aid in their solution;
I know your dingy and
Mournfully dilapidated tenement districts
—The squalor and wretchedness,
The overcrowding—dim, ill-ventilated corri-
dors,
Where the single gas jet
Flickers and flares

So fitfully and drearily,
Casting weird shadows along the crumbling wall-paper of the narrow hallway.
I have also beheld your new and splendid monuments of granite:
Civic buildings
Dedicated to the service of the people.
And I have seen your great schools and other municipal structures
Built worthy of the Children of To-morrow
Whom they shall fashion and consecrate.
I have loved you, great harbor and city,
Your tireless energy,
Your continual work of improvement and reconstruction.
I have watched your subways and foundations
Being built by day and night:
Weirdly wonderful at night,
With torches and electric lamps
Lighting up the faces of the workmen
And casting strange shadows
On the structural work
In the midst of the cavernous rock ledges
Far, far below the street level.
And by day I have watched your steel-girded sky-scrapers being built.

Away up into the clouds,
With tiny specks of workmen
Standing or walking along narrow steel beams
and projecting girders
Silhouetted against the sky.
I have seen your docks and steamers
By day and night,
Beloved harbor.
I have looked out upon you and traveled upon
your tides in the
Dawns and in the sunsets,
In rain and fog, in mist and snow.
I have known you in the spring and in the fall,
in summer and in winter,
At high noon and by starlight and moonlight.
I have been refreshed and rested in your parks,
Uplifted and inspired by your energy and
strength and patience.
I know that in your soul there is a depth of kind-
ness and love
Past all believing,
For I have seen your striving and toiling in your
search
For the truth
And the light
And the right.

I believe in you, for I know that
Where there is a granite monument
There also is a builder's dream.

1915.

IN THE CITY OF TOIL AND DREAMS

City of Toil and Dreams,
City of might and power,
Splendor undying gleams
Proudly each hour.
Sorrow and sin and shame
Often attend thee.
Honor and praise and fame
Millions extend thee.

Dawn—and the shadows fade.
From wall and excavation
The laborer with pick and spade
(Brawn of the nation)
Gazes with sunlit eyes
His tired soul uplifting
Where in the morning skies
Bright clouds are drifting.

Noon—in the cañon streets
Pulses the tide so proudly,

Traffic that rolls and beats
  Steadily, loudly.
Sullen, grim halls and marts,
  Often their star-dreams hiding,
Yet—in their heart of hearts
  Love is abiding.

Sunset—the tired throng
  In street and square and byway
Endlessly streams along
  Avenue, highway.—
All to their homes go back,
  The traffic's roar increasing,
Crowds over bridge and track
  Pass without ceasing.

Night—and the stars on high
  Twinkle their friendly greeting,
Shadows are passing by,
  Lovers are meeting.
Silent the moonbeams play
  Dancing and gleaming,
Now the great city may
  Turn to its dreaming.

Deep in thy starry night
  Sleep through each mystic hour

A pilot saved the helpless ships
  On the waters of Galilee;
He came to this world to seek the lost
  To care for the sick and the poor,
And to bring the wrecks on the sea of life
  To the ports of the other shore.

But the world forgets, and they drift along,
  Derelicts, here and there,
While the ships that pass haven't time to pause
  (For the world hasn't time to care);
So drifting out on the sea of life
  Awash, with the rudder jammed,
And the rocks to clear, but no pilot near,
  Go the legions of the damned.

1910.

THE VISION OF HIS WORK

The mist of early morning clears away,
And sunlight comes—along the harbor vast,
Derrick and dock and steamer wake again;
And buildings of the city come to view;
Great offices that tower to the skies,
Resplendent in the warmth and majesty
Of golden fire—that flares across the bay
And tips with flame a thousand window panes.
Beyond the curving Battery's ferry-slips,
Across the sunlit harbor there appears
The outline of the distant westward shore.
The day-shift dockers now come swarming in
To wharf and yard, while steamers ring with work
Of loading and unloading—blocks and spars
Rattle and creak and groan as derricks swing.
The salty tide with endless lapping wash
Mutters and slips and eddies round the piles
Of time-worn docks where ships have moored for years;

And whistles of the harbor craft ring out,
Echoing back from wall and wharf and pier,
While far above, the white gulls cry and wheel.
And as the wakened harbor shines and gleams
In all the glory of the morning light,
The Vision of His work comes sure and clear
And leads the way, and beckons ever on,
And says to each: "Come on, begin your work
However small and humble it may seem,
Each little helps—the harvest here is great,
Good laborers are few—begin your work."
And from some harbor craft far up the bay
A whistle seems to call—"Begin your Day."

1912.

SNOWSTORM

(Seen from the observation gallery of a sky-scraper tower)

Over the tops of the buildings,
Drifting, swirling snow,
Falling far down, down,
And losing itself in the gray-white mist of drifting flakes below.
The cañon streets are lost somewhere in the whiteness,
Little snow flurries gather and sweep along the near-by ledge of the granite coping and dizzy cornice,
And whirling far out are lost in the dim, white abyss.
For a moment the storm slackens,
First the summits of other great buildings appear,
Granite towers looming out of the grayness;
Then come roofs of other lesser buildings far below;

Lastly, way, way down are seen the snow-gray
streets
With tiny specks of people and trolleys
Crawling slowly along.
Again the storm increases,
The streets disappear,
And soon the other giant office-buildings are
lost to view.
The great tower trembles in the storm
As the gale roars and moans and batters
Around the corners,
And the countless snowflake squadrons
Whirling from the sullen skies above
Go pelting and flying and eddying past the great
tower
And are lost—
Far, far, below—
In the grayness of the vague abyss.

1915.

TO ————

I often wonder, dear,
If in the day,
Or in the moonlit stillness of the night,
When I so often wish that you were near
To make the quiet hours glad and bright;—
Oh, most alluring girl of dreams and play,
Child of my hopes through all eternity,
Perfect in all, and with a heart so true,
I wonder, when I think and dream of you,
If you are also thinking then of me.

1915.

UNDER THE BRIDGE

Only the great, dim bridge,
Far, very far above, and the stars
Dreaming lazily in the warm, still night.
Along the quiet river banks
The sleepy buildings of the city,
Shadowy, vague, blue-gray in the dimness.
The lights along the bank
Burn low;
Here and there on the star-lit tide
Dark moving outlines of boats,
Drowsy toilers of the harbor
Each with lights—white, red, and green,
That glide beneath them in the calm languid
water.
The city is very tired to-night,
Wistfully thinking of half-forgotten yesterdays
Or yearning to-morrows.
There is sadness and magic wonder in the moon-
light,

A boat glides slowly under the great dim bridge,
And the stars dream lazily in the sky
Above the tired harbor
As it sleeps.

1915.

LINCOLN MEMORIAL

(Bronze Statue)

Gaunt—in his humble, homely, wrinkled suit,
Rugged and grim, unswerving, resolute—
Kindly upon the sadness of the town
The great Emancipator gazes down.

. . . . .

But see—the sunset glow has touched the bronze,
Lighting the homely, kindly, saddened face
With sympathy and charity for all,
While here and there about the monument
Are little groups of people. Now a man,
White-haired and halting in his feeble step,
Comes slowly shambling near and leans upon
His walking stick and gazes fondly up
Into the sunlit face—seeming to feel
An inspiration in that life so firm,
So sad, so sympathetic—then he pauses,
Bows his head, and hobbles on again.

A widow next approaches—with a child,
And pointing upward to the glowing bronze
Half whispers a few words that linger long
Within the memory of the wondering boy.
A careless group of idlers saunter up
—But hush their laughter and subdue their tones,
Standing together there in silent thought.
And so throughout the restless, changing hours
The tired and the weary and the sick
Pause for a moment in their hurried course
And then—go on with courage, hope, and strength
To face the endless problems of their lives.

. . . . .

Gaunt—in his humble, homely, wrinkled suit,
Patient and firm, unswerving, resolute—
Kindly upon the sadness of the town
The great Emancipator gazes down.

1913.

THE PRICE

(Voices from the shadows of the great city)

In the glow of the early morning
  When Time stretched out before,
And life was the life of the moment,
  And no sentinel guarded the door
To the paths of sin and pleasure,
  We played as it pleased us most;
Did what a thousand others
  Have done without counting the cost.
We went where our will directed,
  Went and were not afraid—
But now we know when the day is done
  How dear was the price we paid.

1913.

CATHEDRAL BUILDERS

I am only a poor workman on a great Cathedral.
But I praise the Master Builder
That I am allowed to do my share in the building.
Reverently I help to swing the great stone blocks
    into their places;
Where they shall rest
Until the end of the world.
And every evening at sunset,
When the day's work is done,
I look backward
And see with joy that the Cathedral is growing,
And I know
That the work is good.

1915.

EVENING CALM

When all the tumult of the day is past,
  And evening shadows move across the walls
Of towering buildings—looming dim and vast
  From somber streets, where deeper darkness falls;
There comes to me a calmness and a rest
  That stills the troubled soul and brings it peace
Like the reposeful dreaming of the blest
  That after life's long journey find release.

1916.

VOICES

(From the depths of the city)

Well—our story's just the same
As the rest who've tried the game,
  For we've played our hand like other fools,—
    and lost it in the end.
We've thrown our chance away,
And learned just what we pay;
  God—we haven't even got one honest friend.

Oh, the life beyond remaking,
And the horror of the waking,
  When the reeling dawn creeps upward with
    its ghastly mocking light.
And we live through years of pain
Till the shadows fall again
  And we face another hopeless, endless night.

Yes—we've lost the bygone years
And there's little left that cheers,

For the harvest days are over when we might
have worked and won.
So we'll stagger on, God knows,
Till the final chapters close
And the useless, endless life at last is done.

1912.

MORTAL AND IMMORTAL

This is a night of music and of dances,
Moon-madness and the fire of the stars,
This is a night of beauty and enchantment:
Silks and satins,
And the glow of youth,
And love's enamored glances.
Oh, night of nights,
In thy glad hours
Of wonder, love and fire,
Of strength and tenderness,
There is the perfect harmony
Of life and immortality:
The infinite, undying dream eternal
That knows no death
But ever warms and touches with its glow
The universe and all that is therein.
Oh, spirit of eternal youth and truest love,
God's perfect gift to earth from heaven,
Our mortal life is changed to life immortal
By the perfection of thy tenderness divine.

January 30, 1918.

JOAN OF ARC

Joan of Arc,
Your brave undaunted spirit
Through the dark years of tumult and distress
Has helped to make victorious
Your own beloved France.
With gladness and rejoicing you behold
Her fair lands free once more
And her immortal children free,
Under the glorious skies
That you have loved so well.

July, 1919.

"ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN"

"On Earth as it is in Heaven."
It were well
If people everywhere
Would keep those words in mind
Not only when they pray
But through the night and day
Wherever they may be
Striving to make the world more beautiful and
free.
It will be well
When people put aside
Envy and hatred and the bitterness
Of selfishness, and strive instead to make
The earth a kindly and more glorious place
Where faith and light and happiness can dwell
And where all people recognize the great eternal
truths
And the great rights of all humanity
To share the infinite blessings of the world
In brotherhood and sisterhood and love.
And so humanity shall ever be progressing,
Knowing that right shall live above all might
And faith shall ever be victorious
Until at last eternal love shall be
"On Earth as it is in Heaven."

October, 1919.

IN THE NAME OF THE MASTER

Blind—we kneel in darkness,
  Oh grant us of Thy sight.
Come near us, Great Physician,
  And lead us to the light.

Deaf—we ask Thy mercy;
  But touch each waiting ear
That we may know the glory
  Of the truth we long to hear.

Sick—in pain and helpless,
  Through anguish none may tell;
We long to hear the message
  That alone can make us well.

Lame—we lack the power
  To serve Thee in Thy War.
Heal us—that we may follow
  To battle-lines afar.

Lost—we need a Captain;
  Oh grant us in our strife
Thy wisdom, strength, and courage,
  Thy guidance in our life.

1913.

TO YOU

(At the ages of 10, 20, 45, and 70 years.)

To you, because of your youth;
  Because of your faith and trust—
Hold to your visions of truth:
  Dust may not build on dust.

To you, because you are strong,
  And sound of body and limb;
On—though the toil be long,
  On—though the work be grim.

To you, who serve in the field,
  Bearing the brunt of the fight,
Battle till wrong shall yield,
  Blaze the trail of the right.

To you, whose life has been long,
  Teach the old law—ever new:
Bid them be clean and strong,
  Kindly and wise and true.

1913.

SNOW

Snow,
Falling snow
And o'er the somber city stained and gray
The countless flakes come drifting down below
In silent hosts of white—serenely, slow,
Throughout the day.

Still,
Calm and still
The pulsing city's sullen murmur dies,
For now the evening hours come—until
Only the night and snowy squadrons fill
The winter skies.

Clean,
Fresh and clean
To-night the city rests in quiet sleep,
And over all its myriad homes a sheen
Of downy whiteness falls—a mystic scene
Of stillness deep.

All,
One and all
The dwellings of the rich and poor are white
With Heaven's stainless snowy flakes that fall
On window ledge and chimney, roof and wall,
Throughout the night.

1915.

ON CHRISTMAS EVE

Toys in a bright shop window,
  A child forlorn and chilled,
Who stands and looks at the trains and books;
  —And a dream that is not fulfilled.

Houses of stone and granite.
  A tramp, in passing by,
A moment waits at the iron gates;
  —And a hope that is doomed to die.

A mother and child by the fire,
  A mother and child in the street,
A dream and a prayer, a sigh of despair,
  —And a heart that will learn defeat.

Quiet and peace in the city;
  Over the sleeping town
The stars on high in the moonlit sky
  In pity and love look down.

February, 1916.

TO A YOUNG GIRL

You did not know,
When we were talking together last evening,
Carelessly speaking of trivial things,
Whiling away time—
You did not know
That in my heart
I beheld you as the perfection of the creative work of the Master Builder
Who builded the Stars and the Earth
And the Children of Immortality to inherit the Earth.
You did not see—for the light was dim—
That once or twice tears came to my eyes,
I, who have seen—so often—
Other Children of Immortality
Like unto you in soul
But most pitifully tired and sick and helpless in body,
Imprisoned in the heat and shadows of great cities.

Wherefore it was with a feeling almost akin to
    worship
That I beheld you
Who are so fresh, so undefiled, and so happy.
I shall not soon forget our little talk together
    last evening,
When we spoke of various trivial things—
Carelessly, lightheartedly.

1915.

PRAYER

(Easter Eve)

Oh—to-night the city needs Thee, and a million
hearts are calling;
Heed their misery and anguish—Thou who
knowest well their pain;
Send abroad Thy host of workers who shall
change the old conditions
Till the last great Easter morning comes to reign.

1912.

HOME

Over the sands of desert lands
  Or over the waves of the sea,
Across the sky my love thoughts fly
  On wings of eternity.
By day or night they take their flight
  Beside you, dear, to be;
For wherever you are, though near or far,
  Is home, dear heart, for me.

1916.

(Written November, 1916, on the s.s. *Touraine* of the French line while the author was en route for France to join the American Ambulance Field Service.)

TRUE LOVE

Others loved as the sea might love a ship that passes by,
But we, we loved with a dream of love that could never, never die.
Others loved with a mortal love that Death and Time could sever,
But we, we loved with the love that lasts forever and forever.

1916.

ABSENCE

When I am far from you
On land or sea,
By lake or mountainside,
Although the skies may be the deepest blue
And sunshine warm the valleys far and wide,
Although the murmur of the ocean foam
May lull the seacoast through the drowsy day,
While sailboats on the sunlit waters roam
And gulls above the breakers wheel and play,
Yet in the midst of all this happiness
And all this wealth of nature lavished here,
How incomplete is all its graciousness
Without you, dear.
Perhaps it is your hat so trim and neat,
Perhaps the gentle rustle of your dress,
Or else your laughing eyes
That quite complete your loveliness.
Yet I believe that it is more than these,
I think it is your heart so true and kind;
So luring, yet demure and quick to please,
Just such a heart as one might dream to find.

And therefore in my constant thoughts I hold
The vision of your love as pure as gold,
Symbolic of all sanctity and sacredness.
Believe me, dear, my life and happiness
Are not complete, although the skies are blue,
When I am far from you.

1916.

PORTRAIT

(After the fashion of Pope)

Behold her, seated there upon her throne,
A sort of Goddess, waiting all alone.
She knows that hosts of lovers late or soon
Will throng about her, eager for a boon.
Her eyes of blue, her fluffy golden hair,
Would prove a painter's passion and despair.
Her dainty ankle (stocking silken black),
Would make a hasty passer-by look back.
And who her girlish figure could behold
Without desiring her above all gold?
So charmingly she tossed her golden head,
"An angel come from heaven," people said.

1916.

THE DOCTOR

(With acknowledgments to the author of "Gunga Din")

Yes, I knew the doctor well,
And if only I could tell
  You of his work and all he did to lessen pain,
You'd understand the story
Of a life that reaped no glory
  Yet deserved the richest tribute man can gain.

Where the pulse of traffic beat
On the overcrowded street;
  And the city's roar and clatter filled the air;
Where lust and crime and thirst
Brought conditions to the worst,
  You'd be sure to find the doctor working there.

Though the doctor too was poor,
Yet he'd go from door to door
  Of the "East Side" in the night and in the day;

And he'd help them one and all,
For he never failed a call,
  Though he knew he wasn't getting any pay.

A friend of his once said:
"It's too hopeless—they're soon dead,
  Anyhow—just drop the place and come with me";
But he answered (pointing down
To his section of the town),
  "That's the very place a doctor ought to be."

And now his work is done,
And perhaps the doctor's gone
  To a place that knows no sin, or pain, or fear;
But it's ten to one, you know,
That he chose to go below
  Helping those who need him most—As he did here.

1911.

AT VERDUN

(Composed at Verdun, France, January, 1917)

Here, where the forts of grim Verdun stand guard
  Warding a nation's destiny and life;
Here, where the foe's advance at last is barred
  And France is saved, in this appalling strife;
How often do my thoughts go back to thee,
  Beloved one, that I have known so well,
The angel of my dreams across the sea,
  Spirit of Love more fair than words can tell!
Even the tumult of the cannonade
  Seems in the wild weird night to die away
When like a guardian angel, unafraid,
  Thy spirit comes to greet me in the fray.
Ah, surely then has love eternal power
To cheer our spirits through each desperate
    hour.

1917.

THOU KNOWEST

Thou knowest that I love thee, oh my dear!
Thou knowest how through many a youthful
year
Before we both could truly understand,
Even in that enchanted Children's Land,
A certain consciousness of love to be
Attracted each to other.
We could feel and see
The light and hope of love's eternal fire,
And first faint dreams of yearning and desire
That drew me unto you, beloved heart,
And you, dear, unto me.

1916.

DRIFTWOOD OF THE SEAS

Through the channels of the city,
  Wheresoe'er the tide may please,
Drift the legions—helpless, hopeless,
  As the driftwood of the seas.

1911.

THE VERDICT

Oh tell us which is greatest: the Captain of Finance,
Or the toiler with his pick and bar and spade;
The youthful happy heiress who leads the glittering dance,
Or the other child—half fed and underpaid?

Oh tell us who is conqueror: the general on the field
Who knows that all the nation calls him "friend,"
Or the invalid who battles with a foe that will not yield,
Yet smiles and keeps up courage to the end?

And tell us which is greatest: the men who think they know,
Or the unassuming, trusting little child?
"But wasn't there an answer in the ages long ago,
Who was it, now, on whom the Master smiled?"

Oh tell us which is greatest—for the crimson
sunset light
Descends on rich and poor, and high and low!
"The verdict is not spoken till the ending of the
night."
Forgive us, Lord, for who are we to know?

1913.

TO A GIRL

I miss you, little friend. I never knew
  How dear you were until we said good-bye.
  Do you remember now the somber sky,
Sunset, and ash of roses, and gray-blue?
Do you recall the words I spoke to you,
  And you to me? The darkening clouds on high
  Weirdly and coldly told of winter nigh.
How quickly then the happy moments flew!
And now—so many, many miles away—
  I dream of you, and you of me I know.
How often since that well-remembered day
  Have I recalled the sunset and the glow,
And in the land of Memory at last
Lived once again our dream-life of the past!

1915.

AMERICA'S MISSION

Let this be thy mission, America,
First to make thyself
Worthy of the noblest dreams that ever thou hast
    dreamt.
Forgetting not to learn from other lands
Such teachings as they have to offer thee.
And then,
Thus having learned and builded,
Go thou forth;
Not with a sword, but with a scroll
And bid the backward lands,
To learn what thou in turn canst offer them:
Liberty,
Truth,
Democracy,
The brotherhood of all the nations of the earth,
Dwelling in faith and light.
And when to thee shall come
Strangers from foreign shores,
May they behold
Thy monuments of bronze,

Thy buildings vast of granite
Against the skies of blue,
And seeing may they know
That these
Stand as the outward symbols
Of the courage and the freedom of thy Soul.

March, 1916.

HOMEWARD BOUND

For years I've lived afar,
  But now the battle's won,
The ages of toil are passed
  And the work of my life is done.
My home lies far away,
  And oh, the relief from pain,
When at the close of the day
  I turn to mine own again!
Turn to those long-lost paths,
  The haunts of my early trails,
When I lived in a world I loved,—
  A world of tides and rails.
Those who love their own
  They well can understand
My longing for my own—
  My own belovèd land.

Though years have intervened,
  My thoughts have been with you still.
Each mile of the glistening rails,

Each city and river and hill
Of the well-remembered land
Has cheered me through my life,
And led me ever on
Through toil and pain and strife.

But now the night is gone
And I'm off for my home again;
Off for the trails I love
And the city that soothes my pain:
The city beside the sea
Where the glorious harbor lies,
With its towers of steel and stone
That mount to the very skies.
And every ship and train
That I long have loved and known
Will welcome me back again—
When I return to mine own.

1912.

L'ENVOI

Sleep, great city, sleep,
  The silver moon rides high,
The tide so calm and deep
  About thy gates goes by;
  Far in the summer sky
The myriad stars look down
  On granite tower and office wall,
  Humble dwelling and marble hall,
  The drowsy moonlight softens all,—
Over the great gray town.

Turn to your needed rest,
  City of toil and dreams,
High in the starlit west
  The white moon softly gleams;
  The tired city seems
To drowse in the dim, warm night.
  On wall and housetop, high and low,
  Shadows of black, and silver glow,
  Where the slanting moonbeams fall below,
With mystic, starry light.

Wanderer, ragged and sad,
  Lay down your head to rest:
Maiden, radiant, glad,
  Pause in your joyous quest,
  (For the Angel of Sleep has blest
Each one, ere they close their eyes;)
  Dancer—dream of your love at the ball.
  Wanderer—dream of a marble hall,
  For in sleep you are equal, one and all,
By the glow of the star-dim skies.

Sleep, great city, sleep,
  The drowsy moon rides high,
The tide so still and deep
  About thy gates goes by;
  Far in the warm night sky
The pitying stars look down
  On home and tenement, tower and wall,
  Prison and hospital, house and hall,
  The kindly moonlight softens all,—
Over the great, gray town.

1915.

Miscellaneous Poems

STAR OF THE WEST

They come from the other lands,
  Lands of a by-gone day,
From the rule of a tyrant's hands
  And a dream that has passed away.
Poverty, loss, and pain,
  Ignorance, endless toil,
Have been their measure of gain
  From a worn-out, blood-stained soil.

They have been crushed and torn;
  There has been slaughter and strife;
Their lands are wasted and worn,
  And they need new hope and life.
So they come where the great ship rides
  And they pray that they may have rest,
As they follow the star that guides—
  Star of the West.

The gangway soon is crossed,
  The twilight dies away,
The afterglow is lost,
  And the great, dim night holds sway.

Beyond the westward bar,
  The sea is dark and vast;
But the wanderers see a Star
  That shall guide them home at last.

The liner swings from the dock,
  The Lighthouse Cape is cleared,
She passes the last lone rock
  And her course for the West is steered
The travelers gaze on high
  As they sail from a land oppressed,
And they see thee afar in the sky—
  Star of the West.

Star of our steadfast dream—
  Liberty, Truth—
Long may thy splendor gleam,
  Leading our youth.
Bright in thy nobler sky,
  Radiant, blest,
Guide, as the years go by,
  Star of the West.

1914.

SPACE

Into the void of space,
  Beyond the sight of our eyes,
Telescopes barely trace
  The nearer stars of the skies.

And beyond the feeble zone
  Of our latest and greatest lens,
Ultimate, vast, unknown,
  The universe extends.

Moved by resistless force
  Through interstellar night,
Suns, in their ordered course,
  Glow in majestic flight.

In the stormy abyss of space
  Nebulæ flare and swirl;
Comets through star-dust race,
  Luminous meteors whirl

And flash through the starry swarm
  Where the lights of the universe glow,

While newer planets form
  Above, around, below.

Born in terrestrial strife,
  To the law of the universe true,
Worlds, after æons of life,
  Die—to be born anew.

Infinite endless change,
  Limitless space and time,
Systems of worlds that range
  Over their course sublime:

Ever eternal life—
  Ever recurring death—
Ever the dying strife—
  Ever the waking breath.

And little enough we know;
  Little enough we see
Of what the worlds can show.
  Pitiful—what are we?

But this at least we find
  In the starry realms of awe.
An all-controlling mind;
  A universal law.

1913.

TO A COQUETTE

They said you were hard-hearted,
And cruel and vain,
Thinking only of your own pleasure and happiness,
Planning your campaign of conquests
At each ball or entertainment which you attended,
And caring far more for the perfection of your delicately suggestive dress
Than for a world of infinitely better things.
But though many people more or less disapproved of your hard-heartedness,
They all admitted you were beautiful
And charming
And alluring.
Wherefore I desired to meet you and see for myself
What you were like.
I found that you were indeed a coquette—
Apparently quite hard-hearted,

And yet there was something in your eyes and in your manner
That told of a warmth and tenderness
Of heart and soul
Beneath the exterior of light-hearted and trivial frivolity.
And one day this was proved to me;
For as we sat talking together
An old, old man, bent over with age and infirmity
Walked slowly past along the nearby road,
Tapping his walking stick on the pavement,
His head bent to see the road before him and guide his slow footsteps,
Though now and again he looked up to the blue sky and white clouds at the distant horizon
As though at something he would not see for long.
As you watched him
I saw your eyes fill with tears—
Although you tried to hide it from me,
As soon as you knew I knew,
By looking away and calling my attention to something in the other direction.
Soon we resumed our former carelessly happy conversation,
And after dinner that evening
I saw you half pause before a full-length mirror

And glance alluringly over your shoulder
At your reflection:
Then, seemingly satisfied, pass on to the ballroom
Where conquests awaited you.

1915.

BROKEN HEARTS

It is strange to see you unhappy,—
You who were always so light-hearted,
A princess among coquettes,—
You who are so sought after and admired by all men.
Careless breaker of hearts,
It is strange to see you yourself heartbroken,
And we, whose hopes you have so lightly dashed aside—
We, who loved you and thought you loved us
In days gone by,
Sympathize with you
And long to make you happy
(For we have forgiven you, and worship you now as in the past);
And—were we able—would gladly
Restore your lover to you.
But this may not be, dear girl.
You know now what pain is
For your lover loves another girl
Better than you.

1915.

RIVALS

The two girls were rivals.
They had first met a week before,
And since then had only seen each other once or twice—at dances.
But each knew that both were beautiful—
Hence naturally rivals for the admiration of the young men.
When asked if the other were not attractive,
Each would say,
"Yes, she is—But why *does* she do her hair that way?"
Or,
"She's quite attractive—but she would be *much* prettier with a different dress."
Neither would quite admit that the other was absolute perfection.
Both were generally considered to be flirts—
Though kind at heart.
On one occasion at a dance
Each happened to glance over her shoulder at the other.

Just a little bit jealously and scornfully.
Their eyes met
And then—they both laughed good-naturedly,
For they understood.

1915.

IF I WERE DYING

I know that if I were dying, dying,
  Nearing the dim eternal sea,
My thoughts across the distance flying
  Swiftly would come to thee, to thee.

1916.

TO A GIRL

Just to be near you, dear,
And hold you close to me,
And hear the whispered words
That make my dreams come true.
Your love and warmth and tenderness and fire
Flame and awake my spirit with desire.
And each caress
Then seems to bless
The sacredness of love's immortal plan.
Dear heart, it is my constant hope
That always where you are
There I may be,
By mountain far or dreaming sea.
And oh my prayer may Heaven hear:
Just to be near you, dear!

August, 1917.

SHE SLEEPS

"She is not dead but sleepeth,"
Softly now, lest you disturb her in her quiet
dreaming;
"She is not dead but sleepeth,"
Gently now the moonlight through the curtain
lace is streaming.

How peaceful and serene her fair young face,
Her eyelids closed in still, refreshing gladness!
For with a heart so true there is no place
For sorrow or for sadness.
"She is not dead but sleepeth";
Soon again she will awake and leave the silent
portal
To make eternal in our dwelling place
Our love immortal.

August 20, 1917.

FOREVER YOUNG

Forever young, forever like a dream
Of wonder-love and tenderness divine,
My heart will always hold and worship thine
In love undying.
For though the years go past
My dream of youth will last
While time is flying.
Forever you shall be
The same dear heart to me
As in those Golden Days of youth and laughter.
For in the Land of Dreams
Where summer sunshine gleams
As it has been so will it be hereafter.

August 20, 1917.

WORLDS IN THE MAKING

Through the endless night,
  Through the void astray;
Limitless in flight,
  Star-dust drifts away.

Ceaseless radiation
  Whirls the dust afar;
Ceaseless gravitation
  Forms it in a star.

Thus a world is made;
  Thus it takes its place,
Where its course is laid
  In unending space.

1913.

CHILDREN'S LAND

Come where the children play,
  There shall you know
Dreams of another day,
  Long, long ago;
When in the Golden Land
  Likewise you played,
And on the Magic Sand
  Joyously strayed.

Oft from your present road,
  Dreaming—you glance
Back to the old abode,
  As in a trance,
And in your longing eyes,
  Softly the tears
Tell you that bygone ties
  Hold—through the years.

Come to the Land of Dreams,
  Memory Land,
Warmly the sunshine gleams;
  Forest and sand,

Orchard and shady grove,
  Hillside and plain—
Call to their early love,
  Come back again.

So to the Land of Spring,
  Youthful and fair,
Come—it will surely bring
  Rest from all care;
Bright is the Magic Sand,
  Forest and plain—
Come to the Children's Land,
  Dream—once again.

1914.

With the Armies of France

COPYRIGHT, 1918
BY
WM. CARY SANGER, JR.

To the Soldiers and Sailors of America
and her Allies
These War Poems are Dedicated

WITH THE ARMIES OF FRANCE

Armies of France, advance,
Forward the line of blue,
From the Alps away to the channel sea
Into the battle to make men free,
Forward, again, to Victory;
Hail, Armies of France!

1916. Written in the Field in France.

REVEILLE

Dawn—on the fields of Flanders.
Dawn—on the plains of France,
A bugle call and a rampart wall
And a day of sword and lance.

Bayonet, blood and slaughter,
Guns that pound and pound,
Prayer and groan and tortured moan
In the roar of the battle's sound.

Dawn—on the fields of Flanders,
Dawn—on the Marne and the Aisne,
Free from strife—new homes and life
Gladden the waking plain.

1916. Written at Plattsburg Military Training Camp.

THE GIFT OF THE WARRIORS[1]

To you we now bequeath that peace
Which was not ours to know,
Freedom, security—release
From dangers of the foe.
  The foreign ranks shall not again
  Burnt cities trample under,
  Nor shall the hosts across the plain
  Sweep with their steel and thunder.

To you we give that needed rest
Which was not ours to find;
Each night you sleep serenely—blest—
At peace in heart and mind.
  No longer shall the dull red glow
  Flare in the smoke-dimmed heaven,
  Whose flaming cloud-belts weirdly show
  Where countless hosts have striven.

[1] From *The City of Toil and Dreams* by the same author.

And unto you we give that fame
Which was not ours to share,
The glory of a sculptor's name,
A writer's words of prayer.
  For we had dreamed our glorious dreams,
  Each in his field of knowing,
  But we laid them by—for war's dull gleams,
  The hope of our life foregoing.

To you we give those hours of love
That we so early lost,
For war had called on us to prove
Our faith—whate'er the cost.
  The joys of home and fireside:
  A woman's soft caresses
  And children's laughter—merry-eyed,
  The love that cheers and blesses.

And unto you the dawn we give
Which is not ours to see,
To you and yours the right to live,
In thought and action—free.
  To you we give the morning light
  On lake and hillside streaming,
  And flashing on the city's height
  With colors bright and gleaming.

For you the freedom and the life—
For us an unknown grave
After an agony of strife
That others we might save.
  Yet we rejoice that in our pain,
  Our sacrifice and sorrow,
  We may bequeath to you our gain—
  The everlasting Morrow.

January, 1916.

VERDUN

Hail, Verdun, rock of immortal France,
Thy crested forts against the sullen sky
Stand, through the tumult of the foe's advance
That thunders at thy gates with savage cry,
For with the legions of an empire's might
The enemy has crossed the border lands
And through the storm of this world-making fight
Surges about thee with unnumbered bands.
Again, again they come with shell and steel
To storm thee, and to crush thy ramparts down
And trample over France with iron heel,
Burning and devastating field and town.
Yet, day by day, we see thy grim forts stand.
All hail, Verdun, defender of the land!

Composed at Verdun, France, January, 1917.

FOR THOSE WHO DIED IN FRANCE

For those who died in France
By cannon-shell and lance,
Forget not, friend, to pray
That they be truly blest
In their eternal rest
So far away.

When here the moonlight dim,
Through forest branch and limb
Shall sift in checkered-silver patterns fair,
The moonbeams also dance,
In forest groves of France,
And touch the little silent crosses there.

And when the sunlight rays
Shall melt the dawn's dim haze
And call you to your day of Harvest reaping,
Remember, all is still,
For them, on plain and hill:
They who are sleeping.

For Those who Died in France

For you the sunlit hours
Of happiness and flowers
And music of the dance;
Yet at the close of day
Forget not then to pray,
For those who died in France.

Written November, 1916, just before the author sailed for France.

CHRISTMAS EVE

Sunset, the cannonade is dying down,
And one by one the quiet stars appear.
The moonbeams silver fort and field and town
And trace the quiet trenches far and near.
From somewhere in a town back of the lines
A chapel bell is calling in the night,
And high above the hilltop crowned with pines
The evening star is shining calm and bright.
It is as though the Angels of the Blest
Had brought the tired army hosts release,
A little pause, and time for needed rest
And thoughts of home and love and heaven's
peace.
"Good tidings of great joy" for all tonight,
In heaven all is peaceful, all is bright.

Composed in the Field in France, Christmas Eve, 1916.

WHEN SUNSET COMES

When sunset comes, and through each western
portal
The rose-light streams through corridors and
halls
To cheer the hospital, and each poor mortal
Within its walls.

How gladly then we turn our tired faces
To watch the golden windows of the west,
Whose streaming light on wall and corner traces
Visions of rest!

Slowly the sunset fades, the shadows lengthen,
And one by one we watch the stars appear;
The quiet evening seems our hopes to strengthen,
Our hearts to cheer.

For in the stillness of the moonlit hours
Refreshing sleep shall come to one and all;
Our prisoned souls will find again their powers
At heaven's call.

So we shall dream, and all our cares will vanish,
And we shall find our youth and health again,
And every fear our happiness shall banish,
And every pain.

With hearts as light as children we shall waken
And wonder why so long they kept us here,
We who have never even once forsaken
Those we hold dear.

So each of us will leave his cot, and turning
Steal to the door, and tiptoe down the hall,
Where here and there a light is dimly burning
Against the wall.

Then down the big hall stairway to the landing,
And past the drowsy porter at the door,
Soon on the moonlit street we shall be standing,
And free once more.

Then through the paths of memory and gladness,
Each to our special happiness and rest,
Forgotten, then, the shadows and the sadness
Where all is blest.

Some to our childhood days, where summer flowers
Border the trout stream sparkling through the field
And leading to the woods, where dreamy hours
Their pleasures yield.

And some to find the cottage of our childhood,
There by the orchard and the farming land,
Close to the field that borders on the wildwood
So near at hand.

With tears of love our father and our mother
Welcome us home, as in the days long past,
Brother and sister run to meet their brother
Returned at last.

And some of us to find our heart's desire:
The maiden of our dreams with laughing eyes,
Welcoming us with love's immortal fire,
Our dearest prize.

And some to where the mountain ranges tower,
And some will turn to greet the glorious sea,
And each will live through every golden hour
Immortal, free.

So each takes up again his life's endeavor,
Statesman and lawyer, doctor, engineer,
Moulding our dreams of faith to last forever
Afar and near.

Slowly the shadows fade; the dawn, advancing,
Will bid us to retrace our steps again,
Away from fields of youthful dreams entrancing
Back to our pain.

Back in the dawn to where the open portal
Takes us again to suffer through the day
Each in his cot, a prisoner and mortal
In human clay.

So in the hospital, through daylight hours
Sufferers all, we lie in silence there,
Striving with pain that almost overpowers
Our strength to bear.

Till once again the sunset hours returning
Bring us our rest, and all our cares release,
With joy we see the evening lanterns burning,
Beacons of peace.

For sleep will come again with all its glory,
The stars again their quiet watch will keep;
Forgotten, then, life's battle-tarnished story
When we shall sleep.

No longer will the bayonets be gleaming,
And hushed will be the tumult of the drums,
Youthful and free our hearts will turn to dreaming
When sunset comes.

Written in the Field in France, 1917, while in the American Ambulance Field Service.

IT IS THE YOUNG WHO MUST ATONE

It is the young who must atone,
Surely the statesmen might have known,
They who plotted a conquest far,
And plunged the nations into war;
Heedless then of the people's voice,
Deaf to all but a ruler's choice,
Bending low to a gilded crown
And a foolish prince's leering frown;
Surely the statesmen might have known:
It is the young who must atone.

Upon the heights of a great gray town,
Over the harbor looking down
There stands a house and a terrace fair
With vines and lilacs drowsing there.
A little child once used to play
About the garden—in the day,
And in the night his dreams would be
Of the harbor and the glorious sea.
By day, from the western window panes
He watched the busy boats and trains;

The line of docks at the waterside
And the giant ships on the restless tide.
Beyond the river, buildings high
Towered into the pale blue sky.
Spanning the gap from ridge to ridge
There loomed a great suspension bridge,
And so before the child there lay
The harbor and the sunlit bay,
Some day, when I'm grown up, thought he,
I'll paint the city beside the sea.

The child grew up to youth's estate
There by the nation's deep-sea gate,
And day by day he learned to draw
And paint the spirit of what he saw.
To watch the harbor night and day
That was his work, his rest and play,
And all her changing scenes he knew
Day in and out, the whole year through.

At times the summer sunlight gave
Its burnished gold to every wave,
And flashed on city walls and spires
And windows with a thousand fires.
He watched the gorgeous sunset skies

Bright with a million destinies,
Flaming in rose and golden hue
Upon the buildings there in view.

He knew the winter days—so cold
That everything seemed gray and old,
And days of drifting snowflakes white,
That veiled the harbor boats from sight,
Or when the sea-fog, low and gray
Veiled the boats on the sullen bay,
And rising from the mist on high
The city's towers sought the sky.

If in the day 'twas fair to see,
What of the moonlit majesty:
The silver rays of slanting light,
The shadows deep, the calm of night,
Myriad stars in the sky aglow,
Lights of boats on the waves below,
Moving, yellow and red and green,
Like an enchanted Venice scene!

High in the west the moon so bright,
Silvered the bay with a path of light,
And now and then across this track
Of light would pass a shadow black,
The silhouette of a moving boat,

A steamer, or a long car-float,
Couriers they who never sleep
Bearing the trade of the mystic deep.

The youth grew up to man's estate.
No longer now was he to wait
And watch the toiling harbor vast,
Now he would paint the scenes at last:
The busy hours of morning light,
The magic hours of moonlit night.

Up in his western study, there
Were placed five canvases, all bare
And new, beside the window panes
Where he could watch the boats and trains.

These were to be his paintings five
Showing the harbor, tense alive:
A dawn in spring, a summer day,
An autumn sunset on the bay,
A cold gray winter afternoon,
And last of all—a night in June,
The harbor, and the stars, and moon,
His masterpiece.

Far away they spoke the word,
Statesmen had decreed it:

War—the cannon now is heard,
Millions march to feed it;
Millions in the prime of life
Down to slaughter going,
Torn and butchered in the strife,
Red—blood—flowing.

War,
Discordant,
Grim, relentless,
Sweeping aside the monuments
Whose walls were reared
By centuries of consecrated labor.
War—blind destroyer of a countless host of men
Whose youthful lives gave such abundant promise
Of glorious fulfillment:
Architects, painters, sculptors, writers, inventors, statesmen,
Men whose lives, had they been spared,
Would have ennobled and enriched humanity,
And would have made this world
An infinitely better place in which to dwell;
Lives who would have given their contributions glorious
To science and to art.

Sad at heart,
Perplexed and troubled,
The young man followed duty's call
And joined the army,
Leaving his work, his hope, his happiness;
His five unpainted canvases
Waiting the touch of the Master hand
Whose magic brush should make them glow
With life and immortality.
For he had dreamed to show to all
The spirit of the harbor, and its glory,
The soul of all its ships, the wondrous story
Of its love and hope and striving—
That was to be his mission,
His sacred contribution, his message to the world.

The training of the army soon began:
Weary months of drilling,
And then, he and a host of others
Set foot upon the soldier-crowded deck
Of an army transport moored to a pier
Along the harbor water front;
His harbor,
The harbor of his youth and hopes and dreams.

At last the hour of departure came,
The hawsers were cast loose,
And—almost imperceptibly at first—
The ship began to move.
The deep-toned blast of the steamer's whistle
echoed along the docks
As she slowly backed out into the river
And turned her bow to the sea.

Along the harbor water front, the transport
steamed,
Then down the lower bay
Till she had passed the Narrows
And was out to sea.

What of the young man and his dreams?
Later his name was on a list
Reported: "Killed in action."

How still and mystic is the night!
Perhaps it is a night when troubled spirits walk
abroad
And seek to cross the silent veil
Back to their life on earth again.
How sad and kindly are the stars!

How wistfully the moon looks down
Over the harbor and the town!

Is it the window-curtain swaying
As though the drowsy breeze were playing
So languidly about the room
Where shafts of moonlight pierce the gloom?
Is it a figure standing there
Before those five unpainted canvases,
Those canvases, so new, so bare,
So dumbly eloquent
Of that which might have been?
The ghostly form now seems to move
And going to the windows of the west
Looks out upon the harbor.
It is a night in June
And through the drifting clouds on high
The silver summer moon
Shines in the sky.
Sadly the figure turns his gaze
From one great canvas to another
Helplessly, imploringly.

Is it the window-curtain swaying
As though the drowsy breeze were playing

So languidly about the room
Where shafts of moonlight pierce the gloom?
Is there a figure slowly leaving,
Troubled in spirit, sadly grieving?
Or is it just the moonbeam's light
Upon the swaying curtains white,
There in the stillness of the night?

It is the young who must atone,
Surely the statesmen might have known,
They who plotted a conquest far,
And plunged the nations into war;
Heedless then of the people's voice,
Deaf to all but a ruler's choice,
Bending low to a gilded crown
And a foolish prince's leering frown.
Surely the statesmen might have known
It is the young who must atone.

Written in the Field in France, May, 1917, while in the American Ambulance Field Service.

TAPS

Rest in sleep—rest in sleep, soldiers of glory,
All is now hushed on the battle-strewn plain.
Millions hereafter shall learn of your story,
You, who have tasted the chalice of pain.

You who have given your life and its gladness,
All that you were and were hoping to be,
Know that from out of the stillness and sadness,
Life shall awaken eternal and free.

Over the battle-field, fortress and byway
Where you so lately have given your all,
Sunlight and flowers shall gladden the highway,
Roses and vines shall encircle the wall.

Take then the rest that to you is now given,
Sadly the Harvest moon shines in the skies,
Sleep—and the stars will be sentries in heaven,
Till the great Reveille bids you arise.

1916. Written at Plattsburg Military Training Camp.

Additional War Poems 1918

FORWARD MARCH
(U. S. Army)

Forward march—across the plain
Now the bugle calls again,
There beneath the darkening sky
See our armies tramping by.

England, France and Italy,
Allies for world liberty,
Now our soldier ranks extend
To the far horizon's end.

Forward march—we're on our way
To the battle-lines today,
Hear the steady tramp and beat
Of the countless, moving feet.

On to victory in France
Now our army hosts advance,
Freedom's call shall make us strong,
And although the war is long,
This shall ever be our song:
"Forward march."

1918.

IN THE YEARS OF THE WAR

Under what troubled skies your steps have led
you,
Through what unquiet regions dark and drear;
Along what shell-torn heights,
Through dim, weird days and nights
Where death was near.

1918.

A SOLDIER'S THOUGHTS AT SUNSET

Sing me my favorite songs tonight:
The songs of love and the moon's fair light.

Songs of a terrace and lawns and trees
And the fragrant, scarcely stirring breeze
That drifts across the enchanted hills
And all the air with magic fills;
Songs of the dances and rhythmic play
Of the gliding forms to the music's lay;
And sing me a dreamy summer tune
Of a balustrade, and the light of the moon,
And the restful view of the valley there
With its tranquil lake, so still and fair,
Reflecting the myriad stars on high
That twinkle and shine in the warm night sky.
Sing of the lawns where the couples walk
Between the dances—when they talk
And laugh as they wander to and fro
Where the Japanese lanterns softly glow
And the old, old story—ever new
Is whispered there and tokens true

Of love's immortal light are given
The fire and tenderness of heaven;
Making the lawns and gardens seem
Like an enchanted midnight dream
Touched with the silver slanting rays
That light the walks and woodland ways
And sifting down between the leaves,
In the drowsy, scarcely stirring breeze,
Trace their magic all around
In varied patterns on the ground.
How subtly fragrant are the hours,
How witching are the music's powers.

Sing to me then the enchanted lays
Of the walks and lawns and the woodland ways:
The songs of love and the moon's fair light,
Sing me my favorite songs tonight.

1918.

A NIGHT IN THE FUTURE

How quiet is the sea tonight,
It is as though forgetfulness and rest
Had come upon the deep
After the long and troubled years of war.
No longer now the submarine
Prowls in the dimness
Watching for its prey.
No longer the destroyers race to strike
The darkened forms of giant battleships and
    fleets moving across the waters—
Tonight these are but distant memories.
The thunder of the guns no longer shakes the
    startled coast-line,
And the concussion and the tumult of the
    cannonade
Have long since died away.
Tonight the far and peaceful stars look down
    from heaven upon the sea;
One or two lanterns along the coast-line shine
    sleepily,

And far out upon the waters are the lights of a
ship moving along its course.
How restful and how quiet is the night,
How drowsy is the shore line
Where the ground-swell washes lazily upon the
pebbles and the sand.

1918.

FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

America, this is thy gift and contribution to the
    world
In these dark days
When tyranny and might
Strive to enslave the earth.
First: to the aid of thy hard-pressed but still
    undaunted Allies,
Fighting for truth and liberty,
Thou dost send
Thine armies—
Millions of thy sons
To stem the tyrant's tide
And at the last
To drive his savage hordes
Back to the land from whence they came,
And win for liberty and righteousness
The lasting and immortal victory.
And to the far and troubled seas
About the coast of France and England,
Also to other distant waters,
Thou dost send

Thy navy—
To guard the ocean-trails
And with the aid of thy courageous Allies
Sweep from the waves
The lurking submarine
And keep the tyrant's battle-fleets
Locked in their inner harbors.
But of thy gifts, America, greatest is this:
The high idealism of thy world democracy,
Unswerving in thy search and struggle for
The great completion of thy liberal aims:
Freedom and truth and world-wide brotherhood
Right above might,
Love above hate,
Justice to every nation great and small.
Thy lofty singleness of purpose
Shall from the earth
Banish the evils which have laid their heavy
hands of torment
On the world for centuries.
Hail to thee, America;
All hail to thee, Republic of the West,
God guide thee in the hour of battle
And in the years of peace
Which are to come.

1918.

SLEEP AND FORGET

(In Memory of the Soldiers who died during the War)

Sleep and forget, sleep and forget,
After the pain and the tortured endeavor;
Dim to the westward the sun has now set,
Dream of the stars and your loved ones forever.
See the new moon coming up o'er the plain,
Casting its silver light over the lane,
Over the village and over the hall,
Over the field and the cottage wall;
Fragrant now is the sleep of night
Under the silver starry light.

1918.

TO BELGIUM

In those first appalling days
When across life's happy ways
Rolled the thunder and the flare
Of battle, sweeping earth and air,
In its fury storming down
Over valley, field and town;
Belgium, there you took your stand
To defend your sacred land
And humanity and all
Earth's free nations, great and small.
There you met the gathered might
Of the foe, your glorious fight
Gave your Allies time to form
Their battle lines to meet the storm.
Yours the sacrifice and pain,
Yours the glory and the gain,
Though outnumbered in the strife,
Willingly you gave your life,
Bravely faced the countless hordes
Of guns and bayonets and swords.

Checked their furious attack,
Stopped their rush and held them back
Long enough to save mankind
From destruction, cruel and blind.
Belgium, your brave name shall be
Forever loved, forever free.
All the world shall give you praise
And in those returning days
Of happiness, when your domain
To you shall be restored again,
The great reward for your endeavor
Shall be your country—free forever.

FRANCE, September 7, 1918.

TO ENGLAND

Upholding, in the stormy battle-tide,
The sacred cause of Right and Liberty,
In the grim war that rages far and wide
Your forces fight to save humanity.

With your heroic Allies: Belgium, France,
America, and Italy—you stand
Against the tyrant's armies, and advance
In the great battles on the sea and land.

From regions near and far your men come forth
From overseas and distant tropic shore,
From east and west and from the south and
north
They come to aid you in the battle's roar:

Your British Armies fighting in the field,
Your British Navy guarding the wide path
Of the deep seas—until the foe shall yield
Will fight to save the world from storm and
wrath.

Great Britain and your Allies—side by side
You battle for the cause of Liberty,
And, at the last, upon the land and tide
To that great cause will come the Victory.

FRANCE, September 1, 1918.

MOONLIGHT AND THE RUINS

A ruined village and the pale moon's light
On shattered wall and broken gate and tower;
Stillness of dreams in the star-haunted night,
Stillness of death through each uncounted hour,
For empty church and vacant home now sleep
In crumbled quietness, and, over all,
The silver slanting rays and shadows deep
Across the broken stone and plaster fall.

FRANCE, August 28, 1918.

DAWN

One by one the star-points fade:
Weirdly in the eastern sky
Comes the dawn, its light and shade
Strangely tinge the clouds on high,
And the cheerless day reveals
A ruined town, a shattered wall,
A line of trenches which conceals
The cellars of a leveled hall.
Across the dreary fields ahead
The hostile trenches far extend;
In "No Man's Land" a few cold dead
With the malignant landscape blend.
Now and again the sullen roar
Of the artillery wakes the air
And dies away—and as before:
The haunted stillness everywhere.

FRANCE, August 26, 1918.

TO AMERICA

Across the ocean to the aid
Of international liberty,
In order that the world "be made
Safe for democracy,"
Your armies come in numbers vast
And, where the battle storm is growing,
Into the fury of the blast
Your sons are going.

Now along the battered fields
The enemy is falling back
Where the line is crushed and yields
To your intense attack;
The thunder of your guns awake
The startled echoes as they follow
Where the roar and tumult shake
Hill and hollow.

Over shattered trench and road
Forward go your fighting men
Where grenades and shells explode
As they charge again,

Storming trench and fort and town,
See the beaten foe go under
When your grim barrage comes down
With its thunder.

Your far vision consecrates
The work you have set out to do,
Glorious United States,
Now you fight anew
Against the hosts of tyranny,
And you shall gain their strongest portal
And win for world-wide liberty
Life immortal.

FRANCE, September 15, 1918.

IN AFTER YEARS

Upon a summer's day, a child is playing
Beside a green and fragrant clover field,
Along the flower-bordered pathway straying;
On every side the ripened harvest yield
Of sunlit grain and hay await the reaping,
Each vista with the mood of summer blends
And where the vines and roses now are sleeping
A crumbled wall extends.

The child stoops down and picks a flower growing
Close to the vines that cover the old wall
And rests a moment by the stones—unknowing
How in the darkened days when war's grim call
Summoned the armies—once a battle raging
Stormed back and forth across that very land
And by the wall—in mortal strife engaging,
The soldiers took their stand.

But now the sunshine and the meadow flowers
Gladden the heart of the responsive child
Through the enchanted, golden summer hours
With happiness unclouded, undefiled.

How tranquilly all nature now reposes,
How fragrant is the grass and clover where
The child kneels down beside the vines and roses
To gather flowers there.

FRANCE, October 3, 1918.

SUNSET LIGHT

Slowly the pink and gold of sunset light
Comes in the western sky
And with its rosy glow
Warms the shell-shattered ruins of the near-by town,
And the desolate, barren stretch of "No Man's Land."
At fitful intervals
Down the long battle line,
Rolls the reverberant echo of the guns.
How kindly is the heaven-sent light of the setting sun
Amid this scene of death and utter desolation;
In changing hues its colors glow on hill and rosy cloud-bank
Till at last
They fade into the twilight
And in the sky
Appears the evening star.

FRANCE, October 6, 1918.

TO FRANCE

Across the fields and valleys gay
Far bugle calls ring out to-day,
Hark! They are calling!
For to the dim horizon's end
The battle lines of France extend
In strife appalling.

France, your sons have heard the call,
Now, your lines by town and wall
Fast are gaining:
See your ranks—horizon blue
Winning Victory for you,
Death disdaining.

Hear the bursting of the shells
Where the smoke and tumult tells
Its grim story
Of the charge—on hill and plain,
Where your valiant armies gain
Lasting glory.

With your Allies—on you go,
Driving back the stubborn foe,
While your firing
Crushes their opposing ranks,
Now their center and their flanks
Are retiring.

France, your courage is to all
An inspiration and a call,
Brave and glorious;
And beside you we shall fight
Till the bugle calls of Right
Ring victorious.

FRANCE, September 9, 1918.

TO THE CRUSADERS IN THE HOLY LAND

Along the roads bordered by palms and olive trees
To-day Crusaders march.
What far and glorious voices call to them
From the immortal past,
What unseen banners float beside their own,
What hosts unguessed are marching at their side
In Bethlehem and Nazareth and in the Holy City.
Along time-hallowed paths their journey leads them
And they have known
The beauty and the magic of the hills and valleys there:
By day—the sunlight on the sandy shore
Of the blue Mediterranean
Or the banks of the Jordan and the Lake of Galilee;
By night—the stars,
The infinite stars,
With their mystic, peaceful light
On the walls and roofs and streets of the little villages,

And on the hills and tranquil lakes of the Holy
    Land.
Stars of the night,
Far in the sky,
Guiding our brave Crusaders,
What tender and eternal promises you bring
Of life and hope and love
For all mankind.

FRANCE, Sunday, September 29, 1918.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS

American soldiers, valiant soldiers,
Over the broad and restless sea,
Strong in the right you came to fight
For God and truth and liberty.
    Forward through each unquiet hour
    Bravely you battled night and day,
    Faith in the right your strength and power
    Over the stormy way.

American soldiers, dauntless soldiers,
Through all the years that are to be
The world shall bless the splendidness
Of your great victory.
    For you have proved by your endeavor
    Cleanness of heart and body give
    Courage and victory, forever
    Your mighty deeds shall live.

American soldiers, valiant soldiers,
May your immortal spirit lead,
Fearless and brave, on land and wave,
Fighting for those in need;

Till all the world shall be at last
Part of a world democracy
And blessed with love from heaven above,
Strong in the right and free.

February, 1919.

THE TIDE HAS TURNED

The tide has turned, and now the Allied ranks
Are sweeping forward to the north again
Driving the enemy on front and flanks
    Across the plain.

The Marne is free—no longer shall the foe
Strive to break past it with barbaric force,
The quiet river peacefully shall flow
    Along its course.

The Allied armies in the cause of right
Victoriously strive—and this shall be
The monument of their immortal fight:
    The world set free.

FRANCE, August 4, 1918.

THE ENEMY RETREATS

In the weird night the lurid smoke drifts high;
The flare of burning towns along the lines
Of the retreat illumines the dark sky,
Dreary and desolate, the river winds
Its haunted way, along its banks forlorn
A few grotesque and shattered trunks of trees
Like ghosts are standing, stark and gray and
    torn;
There is no sign of life, no stirring breeze,
Only the distant battle's dull refrain:
The ever-rolling rumble from afar
Of cannonading, and across the plain
The restless flashes of the guns of war.

FRANCE, September 8, 1918.

SPIRIT OF FRANCE

Spirit of France, immortal, hail to thee!
Symbol of hope throughout these darkened years
When tyranny and might on land and sea
Bring pain and tears.

Thou and thy valiant Allies, bronzed and brave,
Battle unceasingly against the foe,
Forward across the land and on the wave
Thy legions go.

Forward, and hark the magic of each name
That leads thine armies in the great world war:
The Marne, Verdun and Rheims—eternal fame
Forevermore.

Spirit of France, give ever to the world
The faith and sunshine of thy joyous heart;
Wherever freedom's flag shall be unfurled
Thy strength impart:

Strength in the hour of trial and of pain
Bravely to bear the agony and night,
Trusting that dawn will bring to all again
Its glorious light.

FRANCE, August 4, 1918.

TO ITALY

Sunshine, and a view
Of distant mountains blue,
Happiness and quiet golden hours;
Cities grand and gray
Drowsing through the day:
Italy—a land of dreams and flowers.

Now your armies fight
To defend the right,
Driving back the foe in his endeavor
From the mountain side
To the sparkling tide
Your heroic deeds shall live forever.

Where the river runs
Bravely have your sons
Stopped the hostile hordes that were advancing:
Stopped their fierce attack,
Crushed and forced them back
Where the waters dark and red were glancing.

Allied with the free
Lands of liberty
On you go through battle, toil and sorrow,
Knowing that your fight
To defend the right
Shall make free the people of to-morrow.

FRANCE, 1918.

TO SERBIA

First to feel the shock and storm of war,
First to hear the echoing cannon's roar,
When the savage foe came forth
From the regions of the north
To your door.

Daring, brave, indomitable land,
At the river's bank you took your stand,
Held the striving hordes at bay
Through each desperate night and day,
Valiant band.

There amid the tumult and the flame,
When the battle shock against you came,
Driving back the invader's men,
There you gained, time and again,
Lasting fame.

Later—when the foe in numbers vast
Over your defensive lines swept past,
You were ever in the thought
Of your soldiers as they fought
To the last.

Though you passed through agony and pain,
Losing nearly all of your domain
You fought on, and would not yield
In the strife for town and field,
Hill and plain.

Now—a change comes in the battle-tide;
See your men advancing far and wide,
Forward in the cause of right
With the Allies in the fight
At your side.

Though your towns are battered, wrecked and
burned,
When your fields to you shall be returned,
Victor in the battle's strife,
Your brave land shall have new life,
Nobly earned.

FRANCE, September 24, 1918.

A NIGHT IN WINTER

Darkness and cold,
And the squeak and scuffle of rats
About the old deserted house and hayloft.
Now and again we hear—
Somewhere far out in the frozen night—
The distant thunder of the guns,
And, from the cobweb-covered glass of a little window,
We can see
The weird and troubled flashes along the dim horizon.
Minutes seem like hours—before we get to sleep—
But we draw the army blankets tighter around our chins
And try to forget
The cold and the darkness
And the rats in the old deserted house and hayloft.

FRANCE, August 29, 1918.

TO THE SOLDIERS WHO DIED FOR LIBERTY

The little crosses here and there
On lonely plain and mountain crest
Mark the now-quiet places where,
After the storm, you rest.

It was our privilege to be
Beside you in the cold and rain
And through the night and agony
Of battle, storm and pain.

And ever after we shall find
Strength in the thought of you who gave
All that you had to help mankind,
And died—the world to save.

So take your rest—while far above,
Over the fields of your renown,
With tenderness and pride and love
The stars look down.

BELGIUM, January, 1919.

TO THE CHILDREN OF TO-MORROW

Children of to-morrow, you shall know
Life and its meaning when the world is free,
Untroubled—wheresoever you may go
Upon the glorious land or sunlit sea.
Your years shall not be clouded by the sadness
Of long unquiet days and nights of pain,
For you, life shall be happiness and gladness,
For you—we march to war; be this your gain:

That you may find the world kindly and fair
By day and when the stars are bright above,
For all mankind and even earth and air
Shall be a part of God's eternal love.
No longer shall the hatred and the fire
Of fury and of madness rage afar,
Kindness and love shall be the world's desire;
Strength in the right shall be its guiding star.

And so, throughout the anguish of these days,
Often we turn our thoughts to those bright years

When you shall live, and all earth's happy way
Shall give you every blessing that endears.
It strengthens us to picture you and yours
In those immortal glorious future ages
When Right in its full strength and power endures
And war across the world no longer rages.

Children of to-morrow, whom we love,
It is for you we march to war to-day,
For you white clouds and glorious skies above
Will gladden the bright paths along your way
And give you welcome where each prospect yields
Its gay enchantment to the passing hours:
Sun-checkered groves and fragrant clover fields,
Orchards and byways fair with summer flowers.

And when the sunset light begins to fade,
And, faint and far, the stars commence to shine,
We see you standing near some balustrade
Where vines and roses tenderly entwine.
We hear soft strains of music in the night
And from the terrace we can see them dancing,
The gliding figures, and the mellow light
Upon the scene of youth and beauty glancing.

And so in thought often we see you there
In those far-distant days that we shall give
To you and yours, when freedom everywhere
Will grant to each and all the right to live.
No longer then will dreariness and night
Cloud the fair hours with their pain and sorrow,
Your joyous hearts will look up to the light,
And every dawn will be a glad to-morrow.

So we salute you—spirits yet unborn
Upon this earth—your love the guiding star
That leads us on through these dark days forlorn
Our hope that beckons to us from afar.
We now take up our burden day by day
As we have done through the long years before
Resolved, that when in turn you tread earth's way
Immortal love shall guide you evermore.

FRANCE, August 18, 1918.

THE GUNS ARE STILLED

The guns are stilled; how quiet now
The brown-gray heights and misty plain
After the tumult and the pain;
How tranquil is each leaf and bough,
Wet with the mist—there is no breeze
Nor sound of battle thunder calling,
Only the drops from the wet trees
Drowsily falling.

FRANCE, November 11, 1918.

VICTORY

Victory:
The new immortal dawn,
Bringing to all the people of the world
Vistas of infinitely glorious horizons.
Victory:
The triumph of the right,
The great achievement
Of the liberation of humanity.
Hark to the bells of freedom,
Bringing their joyful tidings
To all mankind to-day:
Long live liberty,
Long live truth,
Long live the right.
So comes the dawn—
The dawn of reawakened hope,
The dawn of new and better life
And love and immortality.

FRANCE, November, 1918.

IMMORTAL BATTLEFIELDS

The battlefields
Where you have fought for liberty
Shall be immortal,
For by your courage and heroic sacrifice
You have ennobled them
And consecrated them forever.
Upon their storm-swept wastes of agony and
glory,
During the long tumultuous years of war,
You offered all that you had to give
In the great cause of freedom and democracy.
The glory of your fame shall never die,
And in the years to come,
Upon those fields,
Great monuments of stone and granite
Shall rear their shafts of white against the blue
Of dreamy summer skies:
Memorials to you and your brave deeds.
In those glad future years
The meadows far and wide will be
Fragrant and fair with clover and with flowers.

Children will play along the sunlit lanes
And groves and byways—and in the fields:
The glorious and consecrated fields
Which you have made immortal.

February, 1919.

In the Land of the Harvest

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BY
WILLIAM CARY SANGER, JR.

To

The Memory of My Brother

Henry Lawrence Sanger

SUMMER

Valleys of green and golden fields entrancing,
  Cool wooded hills that climb to meet the sky,
Fair woodlands, gay with checkered sunlight
    dancing,
  White clouds on high.

Close to the cottage wall the vine is clinging,
  Lazily dreaming are the maple trees;
Far in the blue above a lark is singing,
  Soaring and sailing on the summer breeze.

1917.

SUNSHINE

Along the hills the glint of sunbeams fair
  That kindle field and furrow with their light,
Refreshing with their rays the morning air,
  And cheering vale and hilltop's wooded height.
Far in the blue, the clouds in gathered might
  Sweep in their gathered splendor to the west,
Like sailing squadrons billowing in flight
  Moving at some immortal far behest,
  Across the surging seas to Islands of the Blest.

1916.

RAIN

A veiling mist encompasses the earth,
  Broken at times by sullen drifting rain,
A fitting mood for melancholy's birth
  Fraught with the memories of former pain;
Blossom and leaf alike bow down again,
  With weight of gathered dampness bending
    low,
O'erladen with the moisture they retain,
  And dreary mists across the valleys blow,
  Shrouding the fields where wheat and barley
    grow.

1916.

ODE

"They do not know enough to care or dream,"
So said a passer-by who saw them there,
Wearily trudging home along the street.
A dim and listless afternoon
When the sun's rays
Glowed through the haze,
And seemed to beat
In pulsing cadences and waves of heat
Upon the air,
And everywhere were toilers from the mills;
For them few sunny days were wont to gleam;
From morn till night the factory alone
Dulled with its monotone
Their darkened days;
And yet the hills
Around the town
And up and down the valley far and wide
Gladdened the countryside.
"They do not know enough to care or dream,"
So said the passer-by,

Not knowing how
The soul may be confined yet wander far
Beyond the loom and factory and plow
Seeking a star
Or planet in some dim imagined sky,
A distant gleam,
That beckons far beyond
All earthly bond
Into a day which is the deathless goal
Of every prisoned soul.
A day which has not come, yet is to be
Splendid and free
In the fulfillment of Eternity.

May, 1916.

AFTER THE STYLE OF CHRISTOBEL

Quiet the sea; a lonely star
Shines in the planet-jeweled sky;
The lazy ground-swell plays afar;
A sailing ship serene and slow
Dim on the sea is passing by;
Her lights reflected dance and glow.
Along the coast the wash and sweep
Of drowsy waves their cadence keep,
And on a headland, ghostly white,
A lighthouse flashes through the night.

1916.

A CALL TO THE HARVEST

Harvest fields of burnished gold
  Where the sunlight tips the wheat,
Call again to young and old:
  Leave the office and the street,
Leave the restless city's toil
For the freshness of the soil,
For the plain beneath the sky,
Where the clouds are sailing by;
There your heart shall find its measure
  Of contentment—free from pain,
And the reaping will be pleasure
  As you gather in the grain.

July, 1916.

THE SPADE

A humble thing, but yet its power turns
Great empires, overthrowing Prince and King.
Gold from the mountain, iron from the mine,
These and their like are children of its toil;
Foundations of great palaces and halls,
And vast Cathedral towers owe their birth
To that most potent dynasty—the spade.
And at the last when Captains and when Kings
Sleep after life's long battle—to the ground
The Church consigns their dust; and when the prayers
Are ended and the mourners all depart,
The spade completes their final earthly rites
And bids them rest until the Lord shall come
At the last resurrection of the Dead.

1916.

CHILDREN OF THE FACTORIES

(*After L'Allegro*)

Now the day of toil is done,
Children at the set of sun
Beside their cottage window sill
Watch the twilight on the hill,
Where lights appearing wink and glow
And chimney smoke arises slow;
Seated beside the window ledge,
They talk of voyage and pilgrimage
To foreign lands and distant shores,
And castles great and palace doors.
They dream of gorgeous kings and queens,
And marbled halls and jeweled screens,
Where they may play and wander far
Under the mystic sunset star.
Knights and squires give to each
Words of welcome, kindly speech,
And so in thought they fly away
Into the realm of another day.

1916.

ONE TENTH

If we could say one tenth of all we feel,
Or do one tenth of all we dream and plan;
Telling of things we've witnessed far and wide,
And characters we've met with here and there,
How happy and how thankful we should be.
But why be wasting time on idle thoughts,
For though our lives might last a thousand years
And we had strength to work by night and day,
Yet we could never more than just begin
To tell of all the glory of the world,
Things that have happened since the world began,
And all that happens now from day to day.
Nature is glorious beyond belief;
Man is a living witness of our God;
The Works of Man speak likewise of His power.
The Universe and all the Soul of Life
Are marvelous and glorious and vast.
Yet out of all this endless field of Life

We may but touch some portion here and there.
Our years are all too brief—and soon we pass
Beyond the Portals to that Other Life
Where—by the Cross—we'll waken in the Light;
But while we live, God grant us strength and
power
To see our pathway clear and never halt
For Barrier or Pain—but driving on
Look ever toward the Light—till Life is done.

1913.

AT THE END OF THE DAY

At the end of the day when the sun sinks low
  On plain and ridge and crest,
And the evening shadows deepen and grow,
  And we're tired and sick and opprest;
We come to a home that we all well know,
  Our haven—Wanderer's Rest.

Weary and lone we make our way
  To the portal that opens wide;
And we enter in—at the close of the day;
  For there we may abide.
Nor is there any long delay—
  Once we have stepped inside.

We loose our packs—and free from care
  We lay us down to sleep,
And we rest—and none may rouse us there,
  For we slumber long and deep;
We rest—God knows we need our share
  For the road is rough and steep.

Through the long, hushed night we find release;
  There is no danger nigh.
There is no sound—in silent peace
  The age-long night goes by,
Till the Light that bids the darkness cease
  Dawns in the eastern sky.

1913.

CHILDREN OF THE DAWN

Children of the Dawn are we,
  Watchers of the night,
Eager for the Dark to flee,
  Longing for the Light.

Yearning for the brighter day,
  Dream of every soul;
Striving, though so far away,
  Ever towards the goal.

Radiant—across the years
  Of our world of strife;
Eastward—where the skyline clears,
  Gleams a waking life.

Guided by the dawning glow
  Through the Lands of Night,
Forward on our course we go
  Following the Light.

1913.

AUTUMN

The harvest fields of autumn time are calling,
  Valley and wooded hill and golden plain,
Rejoicing where the sunbeams now are falling
  After the rain.

WHAT DO THEY KNOW OF DEATH?

What do they know of pain
Who only know
The tortured blow
Of brief affliction?

Time will repay them all,
And raise up those who fall;
Their pain shall seem to all
A benediction.

What do they know of death—
They who have died
In might and pride
Of life and power?

Clergy and mourning crowd
Praying with faces bowed
Chanting their psalms aloud
Echo the hour.

But others—they know pain
And death's grim power
Through every hour
Of life—unceasing.

A living death shall keep
Their spirits chained to weep
Till Time shall bid them sleep—
All care releasing.

1916.

THE NEW KINGDOM

We thought that Princes came with Power, and
Pomp, and Pride, and Might,
But Who is this that comes to earth so humbly
in the night?

We thought that Kings were born to sleep with
silk beneath their head,
But Who is this that finds for rest a lowly manger
bed?

We heard that Emperors lived in state and ruled
by rod and bar,
And made their gorgeous journeys in a golden
chariot car;
Striving to teach their subjects that their king-
dom stretched afar.

But Who is this that teaches—the Truth, the
Life, the Way,
Making his humble journeys on foot from day to
day,
Whose name in Faith but spoken—washes all
guilt away?

We heard that Potentates were wont to scorn the
sick and lone,
Careless enough to help the wrecks—who knelt
before their throne;
Careful to aid no interest that would not serve
their own.

But now the lame are walking, even the deaf
can hear;
The blind have sight, the sick are healed, the
weak have nought to fear;
The lepers kneel before him—and rise refreshed
and clear.

We heard that tears were scorned by Kings (for
they were proud and staid);
Who is it weeps beside the grave where Lazarus
is laid?

We thought the Cross a sign of shame—a curse
to hold and bind;
What manner of Prince has made It the emblem
of mankind?

We thought that Death was master of man's
restricted day;
But now we hear a Power has rolled the stone
away.

We thought the years made mock of Kings—and
Time all bonds would sever,
But Who is He who comes to reign forever and
forever?

1913.

THE LIFE BEYOND

Seek not the living among the dead,
  For ye shall not find them there;
Think not they rest in the narrow bed
  That is only the earthly share.

Dust, it is true, shall return to dust,
  And earth to the earth again,
Ashes to ashes—decay and rust
  Are the prizes of earth's domain.

But why do ye seek in the Courts of Night
  For those who are free from bond?
They live—in the Realms of Eternal Light;
  Afar in the life beyond.

1913.

RAILROAD BUILDERS

When every dream was shattered,
When every hope had gone,
Against odds not even a gambler's chance,
They fought their way and they drove their lance
Through rock and cliff—and it's still "Advance."
They *never* give in on the line.

1913.

THE LEGIONS OF LIGHT

They shall cleanse the Earth of a million sins
And a million souls set free;
Their task begins when time begins,
And ends with eternity.
Children, under the skies of blue,
Playing beside the sea
And a world refreshed and made anew
Their monument shall be.

"What do you see in the snowy clouds
Ever and ever so high,
Up by the towering City's shrouds
Where the offices mount to the sky?
All I can see is the vault of blue,
And the billowy clouds in the air,
But I know that your eyes are young and true,
Oh, tell me what you see there!

"And what is that cloud bank far to the west,
Beyond the billows of white?
Its stormy dark and towering crest
Seems like the shadow of night.

I see the distant lightning play,
  Flash and disappear,
And the thunder roars—but speak, I say,
  Oh, what do you see and hear?"

"I see the Legions of Light, my friend,
  In the smoke of the cannonade,
Squadrons that plunge where the ranks extend,
  And the galloping charge is made;
Artillery smoke clouds whirl and change
  As the battle swings along,
And I know that the gunners have found the range
  And they're storming the Forces of Wrong.

"Storming the Forces of Wrong to-day,
  And afar in the upper sky,
Above the clouds where the armies sway,
  The Aërial fleets go by.
Far and far in the higher air
  Of the uppermost strata of mist,
In each successive cloud-belt layer
  Wherever the foe resist.

"I see the flash of the guns that speak
  Across the hills of cloud,
I hear the whir of shells that shriek
  And whine and scream aloud;

The thunder and roar of heavy guns
  Pounding and pounding away
Tell where the barrier river runs
  And the rival armies sway.

"At first the Legions of Light fall back,
  Savagely fights the foe,
Whose thundering charge and grim attack
  Deal his pitiless blow.
But yet as the day wears on apace
  And the sunset fires burn
On cloud and summit in starry space
  I see the war-tide turn.

"For now the Legions of Light advance,
  Their hosts are surging by,
Sweeping the plains and the vast expanse
  Of the valley across the sky.
Their guns boom forth from crag and peak,
  That tower above the plains,
And night comes on, but the guns still speak,
  The Army of Light still gains."

They shall cleanse the Earth of a million sins
  And a million souls set free;
Their task begins when time begins,
  And ends with eternity.

Children, under the skies of blue,
Playing beside the sea
And a world refreshed and made anew
Their monument shall be.

1915.

SEA-COAST MEMORIES

A silent token,
A promise spoken,
Whispered vows, that shall not be broken.
The evening star, and the wave-washed bar—
A light afar—
And a promise spoken.

June, 1916.

THE RUSH HOUR

When the long day's work is ended,
  And the never ceasing beat
Of the traffic's roar is blended
  With the sound of moving feet;
If you watch the crowded places
  Where the workers throng the way,
There you see the tired faces;
  Wearied—after the day.

1913.

NIGHT

The dances now are done—the guests have gone;
Even the revelers are hushed in sleep.
The lamps burn low, the streets are quiet now;
Deserted save where here and there some form
Paces the sidewalk up and down again;
A watcher of the dim, mysterious night.
And far above—all cold, and calm, and white,
The moon floats high through drifting banks of
    cloud,
Its silver glory touching roof and street.

1912.

MIST OF THE SEA

A fog-bell tolling,
The ground-swell rolling,
And dim on the misty beaches shoaling;
A ghostly gray is the fog and spray
And the sea to-day,
As the bells are tolling.

June, 1916.